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STILL IN SUSPENSE

THE news on Thursday morning that a Council of Six, including Rudolf Hess, the Führer's deputy, General Göring and the chief of the Supreme Command had been formed, may mean one of several things. Does this new Council mean that the war of nerves has affected the Führer, and that the new Council has assumed the decision of peace or war? Alternatively there is the suggestion that Hitler, as *le petit caporal*, plans to lead his troops in the field. At this stage no answer can be given to these questions. Nor does the public know the details of the conversations proceeding between the British and German Governments. Mr. Chamberlain, however, gave the House of Commons a sufficient indication of their nature. Hitler reiterates his desire for friendship with the Western democracies, but insists that he must first settle the Polish question in his own way. Britain has expressed full readiness to discuss the question of a general settlement with Germany, but urged that such a settlement must be discussed in a different atmosphere from the present and that any attack on Polish independence immediately involves this country on the Polish side. Clearly the British Government could give no other reply. The first necessity is withdrawal of troops Once the threat of war is withdrawn and it is realised that no such threats can succeed, conversations on wide issues might be possible. Britain's steady adherence to the obligations of the Polish Pact after the signature of the German-Russian Treaty seems to have taken both parties to that Treaty by surprise, and probably had the effect of changing Hitler's time-table. Last week-end seems to have been the date fixed for the destruction of Polish independence.

Pressure has been brought to bear on Hitler from all over the world. President Roosevelt addressed an admirable message both to Poland and to Germany, and received a reply from the Polish President which showed beyond a doubt that Poland is ready for negotiations, and that if there is a war Hitler is the aggressor. Appeals to Hitler have come from the neutral States of Europe and been supported by a great variety of voices, including that of Mr. Gandhi. The Nazis must realise that if there is war to-day the world is as much against Germany as in 1914, and there is every evidence that the German people are profoundly disturbed by the sudden menace of a war

into which they have been assured the Führer would never lead them. If they could speak, there would certainly be no war. Mussolini, in a position of acute difficulty, is in constant communication with Germany, while opinion in Poland and in the West remains completely solid. In regard to English opinion, Mr. Chamberlain said with truth that people of all parties have made up their minds on this issue, however much they may differ about the policy of the Government which has led us to such a pass, and that this determination, combined with the enormous improvement in our defensive preparations, has had a striking effect on British public opinion. It is true that there is in the British public "a general absence of fear or, indeed, of any violent emotion." Crisis has brought courage, but not bellicosity. In our hearts we all know that war, if it comes, will be an immeasurable catastrophe, long enduring and universally ruinous. We know that economic problems and frontier problems cannot be solved on the old basis of national sovereignty; we want to solve them, as President Roosevelt urges, by discussion and commonsense. We also believe that the best hope of peace now lies in determination to stick to our word combined with readiness to seek a way out if there is one.

Far Eastern Reactions

"Full of trepidation" at the results of the German-Soviet Pact the Tokyo Government has resigned. On quitting office, Baron Hiranuma, the late Premier, explained to the Press that in his view the Russo-German pact destroyed the entire basis of the policy he had been pursuing, and that a new policy must be carried out by new men. Whether this means that Japan will now endeavour to regain the goodwill of Britain and America remains to be seen. The new Premier, General Abe, is a non-political soldier credited with neutrality as between the pro-German "Activists" and the faction which has opposed the anti-British campaign as antagonising needlessly the English-speaking peoples. Notwithstanding Italy's protestations of undiminished friendship, Japan has been badly disconcerted by the sudden sight of the chief anti-Comintern crusader shaking hands with the U.S.S.R. With her armies badly bogged in China, Britain antagonised, and her chief potential ally now suspected of doing a deal at Tokyo's expense, Japan is palpably bewildered and angry. Japanese soldiers even salute British officers. It is unlikely, however, that her final attitude either to Britain or China will be determined until the new Cabinet sees how the crisis in Europe develops.

America's Neutrality

On the quality of American neutrality, if it comes to an armed struggle, we need have no anxiety. It would be unbecoming in us to say that the conduct of the Administration in detaining the *Bremen* was a little irregular, but certainly it was reassuring. It would appear, after a slow and deliberate search, that the great ship has no hidden guns: whether she could now, in the event of war, reach the safety of a friendly port, is not so clear. The events of the last few days have already created a powerful wave of feeling for the Western Powers and against isolation. When a junior member of the Administration pilloried the behaviour of Congress over the Neutrality Act as the cause of Hitler's militancy, several leading members of the Opposition frankly confessed their sin. With much judicial moderation the President, at his Press Conference, described it as "a contributory cause," which it may well have been. It is reasonably certain that if war breaks out, a special session of Congress will permit the export of arms as well as other supplies on the "cash and carry" principle.

What Moscow is Thinking

A correspondent in Moscow, writing on the day of the signature of the German pact, states that people received the news calmly and even with enthusiasm. "That's fine—the Germans are no worse than the British, and we don't want war" was a typical remark overheard on the Metro, and a history-teacher—not a party-member summed up the situation thus: "We want peace. At first we thought the chief menace was German Fascism. Then we talked with the British and French and found they were almost ready to perpetrate a war to maintain their empires. So now we'll talk to both sides, and maybe we shall stall off war." This remark illustrates the insular attitude of the average Russian, not dissimilar from the insularity of Britain in the last century. Russia has the geographical position and material resources to play the balance of power by never committing herself to either side, and she is doing so, writes our correspondent, not in the interests of Imperialism, but of Socialism in one country. He adds that if this policy means approving the German annexation of Danzig, he is sure that Russia will make no difficulties, since it can be argued that such a step will be in accord with national self-determination.

Repercussions in the Baltic

Officially the Governments of Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania have all hailed the new Russian-German Treaty as an instrument of peace in Eastern and North-Eastern Europe. The inspired Press in Esthonia wrote that the signature of the Treaty was a proof that the Baltic States were right in concluding similar pacts with Germany a few months ago. The Latvian official newspapers declared that the Russian-German understanding precluded the danger of an armed conflict in the Baltic region. But behind this optimistic façade observers in Riga, Tallinn (Reval) and Kaunas fear that some secret clause may be attached to the German-Soviet Treaty for which the Baltic States will have to pay the price. Ever since the first day of their independence the Baltic States, particularly Esthonia and Latvia, feared that Russia sooner or later would try to regain her lost provinces, and especially their excellent ports, such as Tallinn, Riga and Libau, so vitally needed for her trade with the West. In spite of Russia's excellent behaviour towards the Baltic States in the past, they now fear that the Russian giant cannot content himself in the long run with Leningrad alone; this single outlet to the Baltic Sea is not only hampered by ice during the long winter months, but it can also be easily paralysed by an enemy power dominating the Gulf of Finland. To reconcile Russia to the loss of these ports, Latvia and Esthonia granted her all transit facilities in these ports and on the railways connecting them with her. So far the arrangement has worked well, but now that Russia and Germany have come to an understanding, local observers fear that they may have agreed not only on

the partition of Poland, but also on bringing the Baltic States under complete Russian influence.

Polish Strategy and Hungary

In devising their strategy the Poles have to pay the utmost attention to the eventual attitude of the Hungarians. A Hungary opening her gates to the passage of German troops marching against the Poles would be a terrible blow to Warsaw, for it would be a menace to a largely unfortified frontier zone regarded as safe until now. But the latest information, obtained from Polish official circles, indicates that they do not fear this contingency. On the contrary, they rely on their traditional friendship with the Hungarians which in the past had given them a common king and only recently has led the Poles to assist the Hungarians to obtain Ruthenia. When, a short time ago, Count Czaky, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, declared his country's interests to be identical with those of the Axis, diplomatic circles in Warsaw wondered whether the Polish Government would have to reconsider their attitude to Budapest. The answer was an emphatic " No ! " This view has been supported lately by prominent Polish observers returning from Hungary, who regard the Polish-Hungarian frontier as safe. The Hungarians loathe the idea of helping the Germans to fight the Poles, and no Hungarian will willingly take up arms against them. Should they have to submit to Germany, however, and allow the passage of Nazi troops, the people, deeply incensed at Hitler's *volte-face* in signing a pact with Moscow, may fight the Nazis by guerilla warfare and sabotage. But submission on the part of the Hungarians is by no means certain. Judging by the temper of the masses they would rather fight, even if it were hopeless, and in any case seem resolved not to go to war on the side of Germany. They fear another Trianon.

Down the Danube

The question of trade and traffic on the lower Danube' which concerns Rumania more closely than any other Power, is likely to become of considerable importance if war breaks out and Rumania manages to remain neutral, for a time at any rate. It is impossible yet to prophesy to what extent Russia would supply Germany with raw materials and food from her southern provinces, but if she does so, the obvious and cheap way is across the Black Sea and up the Danube. Under the Statute of the Danube, the European Commission, with its seat in the Delta, guarantees freedom of access to the shipping of all countries. Up to last year, the dominant Powers in this Commission were Great Britain and France, but by the Sinaia Agreement Rumania's sovereignty has been reaffirmed, and at the Danube Mouth in Sulina it is Rumania now, for the first time in her history, who has essential control. Moreover, since March, Germany has been readmitted to the Commission, and it seems likely that instead of sabotaging Russia's reasonable claim to representation, as was at first expected, she will now encourage it. Russia's trade through the Delta has been extremely small in recent years, but whether there is war or not it seems likely that it will now increase ; if there is war, the Western Powers will no longer be in so favourable a position to put obstacles in the way of Russian merchandise reaching German ports. Meanwhile, in the International Commission, which supervises all the rest of the river up to the German—or, if one wishes to be exact, the Slovak—frontier including the vital Sector of the Cataracts and the Iron Gate, a decidedly firmer attitude on the part of Great Britain, who was assumed last year by some of the riparian countries to be disinteresting herself in Danube questions, has been in evidence since the regular conference at Bled some months ago. Nevertheless, in view of the powerful flotilla of gunboats Germany is building for use on the river, it seems unlikely that the activities of the International Commission could long survive the outbreak of hostilities.

South Slav Unity

Among the more fortunate effects of the crisis is the actual completion of the understanding between Croats and Serbs, so often reached and so often repudiated in recent months. In some way which the news does not reveal, the obstruction of the Regent, Prince Paul, has been overcome. Croatia gains an autonomy so complete that only foreign affairs and defence (if the too brief telegrams may be trusted) are reserved for the federal parliament. M. Tsvetcovitch has reconstructed his Cabinet by including several Croats : it will revise the fraudulent electoral law, and then hold free elections. The restoration of internal peace in the Triune Kingdom means that we may now consider it a friendly neutral, whose government should reflect the intense national distrust of the Axis. Germany could have won Jugoslavia only by trading on the feud between Serbs and Croats, as she traded on the dissension between Slovaks and Czechs. We should like to think that Macedonians and Slovenes will enjoy the same measure of autonomy as the Croats, but in the former case any solution as liberal as this is unlikely, though union with Bulgaria might be its fruits.

D.O.RA.

No voice has been raised against the proper action of the Government in securing from a unanimous House its Emergency Powers Act in this " twilight between peace and war." It was necessary at home, and it has had a salutary moral effect abroad. Sir Samuel Hoare gave two welcome undertakings as to the use of his " drastic and flexible " powers. Until war breaks out he will not impose a censorship on the domestic press, nor will he use the provisions for internment. Again, he undertook that any necessary regulation of labour shall be effected under a separate Act, and not under D.O.R.A. Its life, moreover, is not indefinite : the Act is limited to one year. Further, he undertook that some body or bodies should be set up to review the cases of persons who may be interned. The delicate question will soon arise whether Austrian and German refugees must be interned. Undoubtedly there are some Nazi spies among them. But of nine in ten of them, or more, it is safe to say that no men or women in this island will desire more ardently the victory of the Western Powers. All of them would, and many of them could, render valuable services to our cause as combatants, war-workers, nurses and in other ways. In some of these activities even a spy could do no harm. We trust that any measures of internment will be mercifully and sensibly selective.

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PROPAGANDA OR INFORMATION?

WHEN war began in 1914 the civil populations of England, France and Germany were completely taken by surprise. The world seemed peaceful and stable; in England the holiday season had begun, and an international row arising over the murder of an archduke in the East of Europe seemed a distant and irrelevant occurrence. Until the invasion of Belgium the prevailing sentiment, shared by a strong section of the Cabinet, was in favour of neutrality, and two members of the Cabinet resigned when they discovered that Britain had secret commitments of which only the inner Cabinet was aware. When Germany attacked on the Western front doubts were swept away. The British White Paper showing the efforts of Sir Edward Grey to save the peace and the recklessness of the Central Powers convinced most of the world of German war-guilt; the German people of course were equally convinced that they were defending themselves against encirclement. Accounts of atrocities, real and fictitious, were called in to produce a crusading spirit on both sides; the Germans were as convinced about the Belgian priests who were supposed to have encouraged civilians to snipe at German soldiers and gouge out their eyes, as the British were about the child whose hands were cut off and a Canadian soldier who was crucified. In Britain the idealism of the early days changed to a grim determination, and in the end the greatest influence of propaganda was to hasten the destruction of German morale, already undermined by the blockade.

If there is war in 1939, it begins at a very different psychological stage. Outside the Axis Powers the great majority of citizens everywhere have gradually realised the danger from the Nazis and have made up their mind to resist it. They know well that the issue goes far beyond that of Danzig. They know well that war is the worst of human evils; they believe the best chance of peace lies in standing firm. If war does come there will be no need for the Government to persuade the British public or neutral opinion that the aggression comes from Germany. Nor will anybody think it worth while to recount atrocity propaganda; there have been so many atrocities. The major atrocity of bombings from the air in China and in Spain and the full horror of the Jewish persecutions and the terror of the concentration camp are familiar enough already. The British public, if war comes, will begin not in the mood of 1914, but rather in that of 1916, when, with its back to the wall, it settled down to face a long and terrible war of attrition.

The position in the dictatorship countries is quite different. Numerous reports from Germany show that there is complete astonishment at the menace of war. The certainty that the Führer could make no mistakes and could win again "by a twist" and without war, has been so absolute that the very suggestion that war with Poland might mean war with England and France has been ridiculed as impossible. One of the factors in Hitler's mind to-day must be the knowledge that apart from those millions who detest the Nazi regime, there are millions of others who have accepted Hitler as the magician of bloodless victories and who now face a bitter disillusion.

Dr. Goebbels begins with another disadvantage. His feats of lying and perversity on the wireless and in the German newspapers have landed him in a position in which almost no one in Germany believes anything that he says. Outside Germany no one does. Therefore the British authorities have sensibly adopted the policy of refraining from propaganda in the old sense; they are justified in believing that people all over the world will get into the habit of regarding the news that comes from England as sober and reliable. It is strictly true that Britain to-day has no need of propaganda. The Ministry of Information can be a Ministry of Information and not a Ministry of Lies. Dr. Goebbels has made truth Britain's greatest asset.

In the last war Germany relied on swift military victory and despised the moral opinion of the world. Dr. Goebbels has attempted to correct that mistake by a world-wide propaganda campaign. German plans have been advanced by the creation of a fifth column in many countries, by exploiting the fear of Communism amongst the well-to-do everywhere and by an appeal to liberal and pacifist sentiment for sympathy in correcting the wrongs of Versailles; at the same time the threat of war and Germany's barter method of trade have been used to buy friends of different types in many countries. Since the seizure of Prague, followed by the new stand made by Britain and France, these methods of propaganda have become increasingly ineffective, and Germany must either call off aggression or once again fall back on the hope of a purely military victory.

Britain, on the other hand, has recovered psychologically much of the ground she lost during her long period of retreat. The decision to stand by the Polish treaty, with or without Russia, has regained much sympathy lost at Munich, while Catholic and other sentiment, which was outraged by the proposed Russian alliance, has once again rallied to the democratic side. Nor need Britain be seriously troubled by the memories of propaganda in the last war. *Wilsonismus* will no longer go down in Germany; but the detestation of the Nazi philosophy will help, and if the peace or war aims put forward by Britain resolutely envisage a new economic order in a federated Europe, Britain may find on her side allies more valuable than those she purchased by secret treaties in the last war. In America there are still memories of British propaganda. It is still held in some quarters that it was Lord Northcliffe rather than the German U-boat campaign, the sinking of the *Lusitania* and the activities of Dr. Dernburg and Herr von Papen that brought America into the war. The story has not always been told correctly. Von Tirpitz persuaded the German High Command to adopt the policy of unrestricted submarine warfare, not because he was under any illusions about its effect in the United States, but because he hoped to starve Britain out before America intervened. Actually the submarine campaign was defeated and American intervention was in time. But no one who reads the story carefully will imagine that American intervention was due to English propaganda. The influence of Lord Northcliffe and other Englishmen in the United States has been exaggerated. America ultimately came into the war, not because of propaganda, but because the American people could not afford to see Britain and France defeated. Of one thing we can be quite sure: whatever help America gives to the democracies

this time it will not be the result of any propaganda. Britain, in fact, will not do any propaganda in the United States; she will rely on Dr. Goebbels and the menace of the Nazis to bring whatever sympathy and aid America cares to offer.

It has often been said that the next war would be a war of rival propaganda, and it is no doubt true that there will be an immense technical struggle for mastery of the air in both senses of the words. But propaganda has been so overworked on the German side that it will count for less, not for more, than it did last time. If Britain and France can show the world that their objects are, in sober truth, not the preservation of a *status quo* in which no one believes, but the emancipation of common people from tyranny and the promise of a more secure and freer life, then the truth will prevail and the propagandist lie will fall on sterile ground.

LABOUR'S JOB

As we write, the issue of peace and war still hangs in the balance. This country has withstood what was intended to be the final stroke in the war of nerves; and Parliament last week and again this Tuesday has demonstrated that the loss of a potential ally cannot deflect us from the fulfilment of our pledges. A united front against aggression is certainly the best hope of peace; and now that the Government, tragically late, has decided to stand firm, correctly blending firmness on the essential issue with willingness to negotiate if aggression is called off, it is right that Parliament should stand solidly behind it on this issue.

So far, so good. But this national unity against aggression does not in itself solve the difficult question of the proper attitude of the Opposition in such a situation. In a crisis the word Opposition has a nasty sound for many people. They consider that at such a time it is enough that the nation should stand together, and they feel that national unity will be harmed by "party politics." There is, of course, truth in this view; but it should not be forgotten that an Opposition is not merely there to oppose, but to criticise constructively, and that sooner or later the people of this country will need a very different Government. Without an alternative Government representative institutions are a mere mockery. For this reason we believe that the leaders of the parliamentary Labour Party would be ill-advised to listen to those voices which are already appealing for a still closer degree of political unity. There is nothing in a free country more vicious than the idea that it is unpatriotic for the Opposition in Parliament to retain its independence. There is nothing more tempting than the suggestion that Labour should forthwith enter a reconstructed Cabinet and thereby secure that its views are represented in the councils of the nation, or the argument that the interests of the Labour movement would be better defended if three or four Labour M.P.s became Labour Ministers. To enter any reconstructed Cabinet under the present leadership would be to abdicate the responsibility which the Opposition owes to the nation and which the Labour Party owes in particular to the working classes of this country.

Last year the three executives, the General Council of the T.U.C., the Executive Committee of the Parliamentary Labour Party and the National Executive of the Labour Party, entrusted to the National Council of Labour the tasks of keeping contact in various ways with the Government and of stating the policy of Labour in the rapid changes of the crisis. The National Council is a small committee consisting of six each from the industrial and political sides; and once again this year, while leaving policy decisions in the proper hands, it has done the work entrusted to it without the dangerous delays which reference to the larger bodies would entail. Ever since 1931, Labour has been disinclined to delegate responsibility too far; and there has been a danger that it would destroy its own striking force by excessive attention to the red tape of formal democracy. We are glad to see that these suspicions are on the decline. In the last ten days the National Council has exercised far more influence on Government policy than the public knows; and it has been able to do so precisely because of its independence of the Cabinet and its intimate contact with organised Labour. It has represented, though its individual members might not all reach Cabinet rank, that alternative Government which is the basis of democracy. National unity has been shown far more strikingly by its critical support of the Government than if there had been a few Labour Ministers, cut off by their Cabinet rank from organised Labour.

Moreover, the experience of the last war proves conclusively that an Opposition whose will to victory is clear, so far from being a hindrance to efficiency, is of incalculable benefit. In wartime democracy is forced to assume the form of a temporary dictatorship on the Roman model. Vast powers must be placed in the hands of the Government and great decisions must be taken at short notice. Such a dictatorship is only tolerable and can only avoid the inefficiencies of bureaucracy if it is subject to the constant check of a Parliamentary Opposition. When almost every other civic right is curtailed, this political right must be jealously preserved. In the second place the existence and constructive work of a Parliamentary Opposition have very great moral value—vital to the people of this country and equally important for their effect on the dictatorship countries. In the last war the most effective propaganda in Germany was not that manufactured by Government departments, but the speeches and writings of independent men and women and of the British Parliamentary Opposition. If war comes the conflict will be between the countries which retain the ideals of freedom of Western civilisation and the Nazis, who are determined to destroy them. In order to fight effectively for those ideals, we must preserve them as far as possible in our national life.

Nor must the call for national unity make us forget the deep chasm which divides the Opposition from the National Government. In so far as Mr. Chamberlain is now so late carrying out a hopeful policy—we are the first to agree that the Government has done all it could during the last ten days—it is not his own policy. Instead of leading public opinion, the National Government has, since 1935, been dragged reluctantly and with disastrous indecisiveness at the heels of public opinion. It has tried its own policies, and not till they all have failed has it reluctantly adopted the policy which the Opposition in Parliament and the nation at large have for years demanded. It would be folly to believe that such a Government has been really converted to our beliefs.

In the past weeks we have urged in this paper the paramount importance of setting out both for the British public and for the nations of the world the war aims or peace aims of this country. We have been well aware that in demanding this we were asking for something that is outside the scope and interests of this Government. It is composed of men whose pre-war outlook and Conservative support in the country prevent their tackling problems of European and world reconstruction with an outlook fundamentally different from that of 1919. If, in the course of the war or the salvaging of peace, Labour is to play the part which is demanded of it, it can only be by a resolute independence. It is futile to enumerate the number of ministerial posts which Labour would require in order to agree to a coalition, before we have compared the aims and objectives which a Labour Government would have, whether in peace or war, with those of Mr. Chamberlain. For it is not merely a question of Labour retaining its influence if it enters the Cabinet, but of ensuring that the ideals, for which Labour stands and without whose realisation there can be no permanent peace, are challengingly proclaimed in Opposition and finally put into practice by a Government competent to carry them out.

Finally, we urge that the nation needs a reserve of political strength for an emergency. We are only at the beginning of the crisis. Whether war comes or not in the near future, we are entering upon a period of profound social and international revolution, and the nation needs a political leadership unencumbered with the responsibility for the blunders which have brought us where we stand. If Labour enters a Cabinet in the near future it will make itself, in the eyes of the public, responsible for the legacy of the past and for the troubles which lie ahead. Such self-sacrifice is neither opportune nor patriotic. No one can doubt Labour's determination to fight Fascism; everyone knows that it has been far more resolute than the present Government. It will be the vital task of the Party in the coming months to show that Fascism cannot be fought and overcome by those who are merely out to defend the *status quo*, but only by those who are determined and know how to reconstruct the international order. That cannot be done inside the present National Government, nor can it be done by an Opposition which fears that it may be charged with impropriety if it criticises. Labour must insist not only on resolution in the conduct of diplomacy, or, if necessary, of war, but also on the maintenance of democracy in the crisis and on the formulation of war or peace aims for which a democracy may proudly stand.

TURKEY AGAINST HITLER

To judge from the Nazi press, Turkey's alliance with Great Britain and France has been a serious blow to Hitler. And no wonder. For if Poland, Roumania and Greece are the front line of any Peace Front, Turkey is its Hindenburg Line—the last ditch defending the whole Near East from the Nazis. Also the Dardanelles are the one line of communications, open all the year round, between the Western Powers and the Black Sea States. In winning Turkey over to our side we have, then, won a key position; but can we hold it? How strong, stable and determined is the new Turkey?

Turkey is the country of a successful revolution. Consider what Turkey was like only seventeen years ago. The improvident and corrupt rulers of the Ottoman Empire had sold for cash its economic freedom. All through the Industrial Revolution, instead of building industries like other nations, they let others destroy by competition the native industries of Bursa and Ankara. Already by 1914, for all the luxury of Istanbul, Turkey was a very poor country, with no modern industry, and with all her railways and ports in the hands of foreign financiers, who exacted not only fantastic profits but political privileges. Then, in the mobilisation of 1914, Enver boasted that he produced an army without money. What he did was to impoverish the country; he confiscated nearly all the livestock so that reproduction almost ceased, he deprived thousands of families of their breadwinners so that they starved and their farms went out of cultivation, and he raised requisition to the pitch of plunder, paralysing trade. He followed this up by the massacre of the Armenians—the greatest and cruellest massacre in recorded history. Kemal Atatürk himself completed it, and in 1922 drove the Greeks out of Asia Minor. All this meant the loss of great wealth and of the only people in old Turkey who had experience of commerce and finance. It was in a Turkey so impoverished, exhausted also by eleven years of warfare, that Atatürk had to create a nation fit to face the twentieth century.

How strong is Turkey after seventeen years of Kemalism? Although she is rich in experienced generals and can supply much of her own ammunition (100,000,000 Turkish pounds—roughly £11,000,000 sterling—are invested in the war factories of Kirikkale alone), poverty is still the grave weakness. How can a country of 16,000,000 inhabitants reach a Czechoslovak pre-Munich standard in its armed forces when its whole budget is about as large as that of Paris? Luckily this is not as grave as it sounds. First, thanks to the loss of the Empire of the Sultans and to the massacres and expulsions, Turkey has no dangerous minority, the million Kurds being without a great neighbour to support them. Turkey is also far away from any initial German attack, and has only 250 miles of frontier in Europe, in Asia none but friendly neighbours; she can grow her own food and has coal and wood and all the main industrial materials; she has no oil as yet, but is quite close to three great oilfields; and, of course, she has the great advantage of commanding access to the Black Sea. Secondly, the French and British military missions and the British engineers who have been inspecting her ports will, no doubt, see that she gets any help required to put any serious defects quickly right. That done, can Turkey hold her key position if there is a long and all-in struggle between the Great Powers? The answer depends on how far Turkey is industrially self-sufficient, and how far politically stable.

In present-day Turkey the building of a factory or the opening of a bank is not a prosaic affair or a mere matter of profits for somebody: it is a part of patriotism, because without a great effort of economic liberation Turkey's political independence is nominal and insecure. Since 1922 Turkey has settled nearly all the debts of the Ottoman Empire, bought up nearly all the old railways, and set up a banking system and a modern industry of her own. In this the State has taken a big part, chiefly because the State alone has the credit required to build railways and factories on a big scale. An American observer, Professor Webster, reckons that, agriculture apart, about half the salary-earners and wage-earners "are on the Government or quasi-Government pay-rolls." In 1934, after the world economic crisis had ended free trade and made a balanced economy essential to any peaceful country, Turkey began a Five-Year Plan with the help of Russian credits. It was a plan for creating textile, cellulose, mining, ceramic and chemical industries. By the end of 1938—that is, after four years—the mining, cellulose and textile plants were complete, Turkey having drawn three million gold dollars of the Russian credits. This Five-Year Plan was not the whole. Lately and at great speed Turkey has carried out two big enterprises vital to the balancing of her economy and to national defence. One is the building of railways—notably a railway joining the coal-mines and ports of the Zonguldak district to Ankara by way of Karabük, and a railway joining Sivas to Erzerum (and so Ankara to Russia). Both of them were begun only in 1933; one is all but finished, the other is finished. Altogether, since 1924, Turkey has roughly doubled her length of railways. The other bold creation is the iron and steel works of Karabük. Two years ago, still not knowing whether there was iron ore in the country, the Turkish Government gave to Brassert and Co., a British firm, a contract to build a full-size, up-to-date iron and steel works at a cost of nearly £5,000,000 sterling. The place was deserted, nothing but paddy-fields; now it is a modern town, complete with swimming-pools and football-fields, attached to the very latest thing in steelworks, just beginning production. Coal comes by rail from the coast, about 70 miles away; good quality hematite iron ore has now been found, fairly accessible. The total production will be about 150,000 tons of rolled steel a year, and room has been left for adding two more blast-furnaces to the two that are there. This achievement must make a big difference to Turkey's strength in war and diplomacy.

But how stable is the present regime? State control of industry and banking in Turkey is not of the Fascist kind: though its enterprises are bold, it keeps strictly within its means; therefore a financial crisis is highly unlikely. Class war also is ruled out for some years; for there is no large class of rich people since the Greeks and Armenians were liquidated, Communists get no mercy, and the workers in the new industries get wages which, though low, are higher than what they earned as peasants, while their standard of life is still simple. Serious opposition is feudal and religious. The Eastern *vilayets* are still rather like the Wild West in the middle of last century, with a million Kurds for Red Indians: there is fighting there every now and then, but it can hardly become a serious danger if Iraq and Russia are friendly to

Turkey. Among the fifteen million Turks also there has been some bitter opposition, for in seventeen years these people, after being priest-ridden for centuries, have seen Islam disestablished, women emancipated, clothes westernised, alphabet latinised, calendar and Sabbath christianised. Atatürk stamped ruthlessly on any resistance, but explained carefully the reasons for each change. He had the authority of his victories, military and diplomatic, and the Turkish man-in-the-street is mostly passive about politics, unlike the Greeks who are all politicians. As economic conditions improved and priestly influence fell away, most Turks came to see the reforms as necessary and to take pride in them. At present a worship of Atatürk unites the people; and General Ismet Inönü, his successor, is not only trusted but expected to carry on his policy. In April, when General Kiazim Kara Bekir gave an interview criticising Atatürk—an interview which some regarded as a move of the new President's, designed to test the people—the people, and especially the young, reacted powerfully against it. Clearly there is no deviation from Atatürk's experiment in practical politics, and the Axis will find in Turkey little chance of exciting a Holy Civil War.

And foreign policy? Is Turkey a firm member of a coalition against aggression? Englishmen and Frenchmen who have had to deal with the Turkish Government say that its members are utterly straightforward and that each promise or demand they make is exactly weighed and then maintained. When they decided on the alliance with Great Britain and France, they foresaw and accepted all its consequences. They have, for instance, for the last two months or so been getting rid of their German technicians; and no German is allowed at Karabük. Von Papen clearly realises that his position is for the moment hopeless: he is simply treating all Turks with extreme politeness and waiting for Great Britain or France to make a mistake. Of this there is some danger. For instance, Turkey expects Englishmen and Frenchmen to do their duty, to take their share of the consequences of the alliance. One of these is that they must help Turkey to find a substitute for her trade with Germany—which is about half Turkey's whole foreign trade. An obstacle is that the Turkish pound is greatly overvalued and the export prices of Turkish goods too high. This the Turkish Government recognises, and an ingenious scheme of devaluation is likely any day. But this done, British and French help will have to be generous. Another danger is Syria: when France ceded Alexandretta to Turkey, Inönü and Saracoglu said that Turkey had no more territorial demands. Unlike Hitler, they are to be believed, but the case might alter if in Syria there were unrest and concessions. The inferiority complex of the Turks is also a danger: already some feel wounded because the British military mission to their country happened to have only a brigadier-general at its head, while the Poles received General Sir Edward Ironside himself. The worst danger might be another Munich. . . . If Hitler is gratuitously given a second chance in Turkey, he will jump at it. If not, we have a dependable ally in a key position. JONATHAN GRIFFIN

A LONDON DIARY

I HAVE found some light relief during the crisis in the reactions in this country to the German-Soviet Pact. The pictures of Stalin and Ribbentrop together wreathed in smiles and of the Moscow aerodrome wreathed in swastikas certainly took a deal of swallowing. But I soon got over the shock, because I have long regarded Stalin as the astute and unscrupulous ruler of a great nation whose help we needed, and not, to quote Mr. Gladstone, as "the divine figure of the North," watchful of the interests of every proletarian sparrow. Why cannot people just face the truth that Stalin had two policies, to join with the Western Powers against Hitler if he thought them serious, and to do a Munich with Hitler if he did not think them sincere, and that he chose the second? Of course the Communists will not hear of anything so simple as that Stalin aims primarily at peace for his own country. They still call the Pact a master stroke "for peace and democracy," while the I.P.C. urges the necessity of an Anglo-Soviet pact (assuming that that is still to be had for the asking!) and in the same breath proclaim the achievement of Stalin in securing Spanish neutrality and bogging Japan. That looks like trying to have it all ways at once. The *rapprochement* of Russia and Germany has produced certain compensating advantages to this country in the Far East and in the Catholic countries. But obviously those advantages depend entirely on our *not* being allied to Russia!

* * *

Much of this confusion arises because so many people have locked up all their *moral* capital in the U.S.S.R. They have either cursed Stalin as Beelzebub or blessed him as the new Messiah (the Dean of St. Paul's calls the Pact "a Judas stroke," as if Stalin had ever been a disciple of Christ), and completely forgotten that Russia is a sovereign state with a highly realistic set of rulers who should, if only on Marxist principles, play the realistic game of politics more adroitly than anyone else. Some readers have written complaining that last week this journal did not voice our indignation at Stalin's double-dealing—as if to say he "double-crossed" Britain and France was praise. But what's the good of either indignation or special pleading? Power-politics is not a matter of Christian morality but of self-interest. Stalin has done to us what Britain tried in the past to do to Russia, and I hear that Molotov enjoyed telling the British Ambassador this and adding that Germany had sent her Foreign Secretary to arrange things while we only sent a Foreign Office official! Enough of all this unreality. The interesting questions are whether the Pact includes, as some say, arrangements for the partition of Poland and if Stalin is prepared to help Germany in war. I ask myself whether he does still want an understanding with Britain now that he finds to his surprise, as Voroshilov's speech shows, that Britain did mean to stand by Poland, and whether this ruler of a great nation still has lurking in his mind the old idea of world revolution and the chance of leading it if other less astute Powers plunge into war.

* * *

Surely the B.B.C. treats us rather shabbily. A few news summaries of information also appearing in the daily press are not adequate at such a time. I remember last September commenting on the brilliantly full radio programme available to the American listener—hook-ups from Paris, London, Prague and Berlin, the vivid impression of the atmosphere of the countries involved and the constant record of the swiftly developing situation. In consequence British people visiting the United States have found recently a public far better informed than ours. The old notion that the Middle West was an ignorant backwood where no one has heard of Europe, has been finally shattered. The same thing is happening again: our wireless announcements are quiet and sensible, but they include no reports from special correspondents; they make no effort to do the job as Americans understand it. I realise of course that American wireless is independent and that Washington runs no risks from outspoken radio talks. The B.B.C. must go more carefully than the American wireless, but I am sure it could with advantage give much more interesting *news* than it does. On the other hand the B.B.C. broadcasts to Germany have suddenly changed from colourless news bulletins and become outspoken and challenging. Here is a picture of the European scene, of the strength of the Peace Front, an account of the plight of Italy and so forth. But an Englishman has to know German to learn from the B.B.C. anything that is not in the newspapers.

* * *

I listened to the broadcast report of the Premier's speech on Tuesday, at Radiolympia. It was broadcast by the main loudspeakers in driblets as the report came through to the B.B.C.; in the intervals the station broadcast music and the demonstrators at their stands continued to play their machines

pretty loudly to prospective customers. And without ceasing throughout the speech the numerous television sets shouted out a lurid drama by Edgar Wallace which the B.B.C. was sending out throughout the afternoon. As I walked along the narrow channels between the great stands, blasts of conflicting sounds, with the suddenness of gusts of wind down a tunnel, came to my ears, each abruptly cutting off the previous one and equally abruptly vanishing into the ceaseless indeterminate shouting that fills Olympia. Sometimes the effect was merely senseless, as when

> Mr. Chamberlain said he would see that the House was kept as far as possible continuously informed of all the developments of the situation as soon as they took place—

was followed by

> will now sing *The Pretty Little Quaker Girl*—

sometimes it was rude, as when

> it was not in the public interest to publish such confidential communications or to comment on them in detail at this stage—

was cut across by an enraged yell from the Wallace play:

> How dare you say a thing like that? What do you mean by such nonsense?—

Once it was more apt. After a summary of Mr. Chamberlain's passage saying that upon Hitler and his reply to the British communication rested the chance of peace, and that in Britain there was confidence and determination, the nearest television set cut in with a series of high-pitched screams, followed by a deep stage voice: "Thought he could scare Scotland Yard, huh?"

* * *

Last week-end, when it was first generally realised the situation was serious, the suburbs of London were as calm and steady as the most optimistic could have predicted. The very few who panicked were for that reason more obvious; there were, of course, a few. In a north-western branch of a big bank the clerks unbent enough to discuss it with a customer. "How will it affect you?"—"Don't know, sir. Not much extra work, yet; some people taking their money and getting out, but not many."—"The big accounts?"—"No *big* accounts like that here, sir. But it seems true the more they have the faster they run."—"Rabbitocracy," said a fat man at the back, "that's the word."

* * *

One large London stores, sold out of black cloth before the week-end, had to notify its customers that the suppliers had raised the price and that the price this week had gone up by one-third. Another was selling black shades at 9*d*.—any other colours 6*d*. In the time it seems impossible that there can be any legitimate reason of increased cost to justify this increase in prices. I have heard of other cases equally disturbing. If profiteering is starting already, the Government should be ready to deal with it. Surely the experience of the last war should have prepared them for it.

* * *

How far has the censorship of opinion gone in France? Before the crisis became acute, as I gather from an editorial note in the *New Republic*, an American resident in France ordered a parcel of books about Spain from England. The French customs refused delivery because too many of these books were hostile to Franco.

* * *

> I heard recently of an amusing incident that occurred in the desperate rush to rescue refugee Jews. One of the responsible Committees here was suddenly informed that there was a party of 250 Catholic refugees in Holland waiting to be received in this country. The Catholic authorities bestirred themselves and the party arrived. It then turned out that they were Jews who had been baptised the previous night. I should like to shake hands with the priest who baptised them.

* * *

"Japan is the only democratic country left in the world?" "How's that?" "It's the only country in which the Government resigns when it has to admit that its policy has been a failure!"

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to P. L. Mason.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

> I met a lady who was wondering whether anyone in the country would be found willing to take care of her two dachshunds for her. "They were both born in this country," she said anxiously, "and so were their parents. They are really *English* dogs at heart."—Atticus II in *Sunday Times*.

> The Prime Minister had not finished his cigar when the time came yesterday for him to leave Downing Street for the House of Commons. So he took it with him.—*Daily Sketch*.

> Russian diplomacy—also German ever since the time of Bismarck—has never, in the long run, been able to cope with our own straightforward, candid honesty.—*Liverpool Daily Post*.

> The God who founded this college on faith and sustained it on prayer for the last fifteen years by causing to be sent in a couple of hundreds of thousands of pounds has heard our prayers for intercession, and made it known to the Director that the present crisis will not end in a European war.—Rev. Rees Howells, hon. director of Bible College of Wales, quoted in *S. Wales Echo & Express*.

THE PUBLIC NEEDS INFORMATION

> In a situation of such extreme delicacy, and when issues so grave hang precariously in the balance, it is not in the public interest to publish . . . . Neville Chamberlain, House of Commons, 3 p.m., Tuesday, August 29th.

As important as the war of arms is the war of nerves. We are already fighting the latter; and it has been the particular study of Mass-Observation to follow this contest. Let's try at the same time to be candid and constructive about it.

We, as a nation, are now definitely involved in a war situation, and feel we cannot back out or let Hitler break in. We stand by Poland. There is therefore no longer a problem, a *doubt*, for the British citizen. Last September there was an enormous doubt. Now doubt is removed—and with that removal, bewilderment and panic are enormously eased. Under such circumstances, no war of nerves can succeed. Nerves crack on doubt, not on certainty.

On all objective criteria, the present crisis is hardly a crisis at all in the psychological sense of last September. A few examples. Of 16 businesses in Fulham last September, every one reported slump in trade. Of 16 businesses in Fulham this week, only hairdressers had lost trade. Coach bookings, though, have slumped—the opposite effect to last year, when they soared with people trying to get out of London. On the other hand, a number of commodities, such as night lights, will and deed boxes, gummed tape and black paper boomed. Similarly in Worktown, shop counts showed that this week-end's buyers were *absolutely normal* quantitively in Town Market, Woolworths, Marks and Spencers as compared with other week-ends. Analysis of groceries bought showed larger than usual purchases of tinned and dried goods on Friday and Saturday. Many working-class women were spending an average of 5*s*. on these, along lines indicated by one overheard: "I'm not buying a great deal extra. I just double the essential things before rationing takes place." One housewife was seen to buy 40 tins, which her husband carried away in three bags; cost 11*s*. 7½*d*. Another housewife nearby commented: "I would not stock in like that until I knew," while another said: "I'd buy a bit extra, but not all that." Door-to-door sampling in London showed 13 per cent. of working-class housewives who said they had bought extra food to store while in Worktown it was 19 per cent. But among

upper middle-class people in London, over 80 per cent. had stored (results to Tuesday).

Or take religion. In the last crisis people crowded to church, and the papers were full of godly utterance. While bishops welcomed this as a return to religion, to the impartial observer it appeared rather more escapist and hysterical. In the present crisis there has been nothing of the kind. There were scarcely more than normal congregations at local churches observed on Sunday. As the Head Verger of Westminster Abbey correctly put it to an observer, "There is no noticeable difference—certainly not so many as last September. I'm not sure why it is—possibly they are getting used to it. There's not a great number this time at the Unknown Warrior's grave—they wired off as much again last year as that. I suppose people are getting used to a series of crises." And at 10.30 Matins in St. Paul's Cathedral, the preacher spoke for 16 minutes to only 250 people, about *Mein Kampf* and "The Soldiers of Christ."

In the last series of crises, we found a steady decline in interest, more and more people taking less and less interest. In this crisis, investigation so far shows an opposite tendency, with 65 per cent. of the women and 55 per cent. of the men definitely stating that they are taking *more* interest in this crisis than last September. Here again, a realism quite lacking last year. And a realism more marked in the working classes at the moment.

How then, does one account for the low proportion who are storing recommended quantities of food? The first reason is simple. The mass of people can't afford to store. Similarly, the mass of people cannot follow some of the instructions given by the Public Information Leaflets, which suggest, for example, that you clear all inflammables from the upper floor of your house, and treat it as a sort of protective zone in the home. As most homes in England have under four rooms, and as an enormous proportion o urban populations don't live on the ground floor anyway, this advice from better-housed Civil Servants automatically missed the mark. In two areas of London so far investigated, we find that only 3 per cent. of working-class families have prepared a proper "refuge room," along the lines recommended in innumerable press and other instructions. When asked why not, much the commonest reason given is that it would interfere hopelessly with the light and ventilation of the family's living. Similarly, whereas 100 per cent. of the sample have gas masks, which were issued free, only a little over one-third in London and a little under one-third in Worktown (to Tuesday) had black-out apparatus which cost money.

From these facts, it naturally follows that there is another factor than the economic. It is the information factor. For the public have not only got to be "calm" and "brave," that is psychologically prepared, they must also be *intelligently prepared*. The calmness which will see the civil population through an air-raid must be intelligent and informed. The disconcerting fact in our data so far is the lack of full understanding of official instructions. This is partly due to the technique of propaganda employed.

For instance, broadcasts are read so fast that they cannot be written down by listeners, and the language used is often obscure to working-class people. The repeated B.B.C. announcements of the School Evacuation Rehearsal included reference to "transport" not being provided on this occasion. It was not made clear whether this was *to* or *from* the school or *where to?* And the fact was overlooked that to many people the word transport means goods, not passengers.

Many confusions arise in this way among the masses. Thus, slightly more gave a wrong or "don't know" answer than gave a correct one when asked which floor a refuge room should be made on. Similarly, seven times as many gave the wrong answer than gave the right one when asked what should be the signal of the approach of enemy aircraft. On incendiary bombs things were better. Twice as many were right as wrong; but the wrongs, whose remedies included sawdust and buckets of water, could do harm! In every case, the same questions among middle-class people showed a large majority correct. (Results up to Monday.)

Most of this type of doubt could be removed if much more attention was paid to the words, grammar, speed, lay-out, and illustration of information, written, spoken and screen. At present these instructions—of vital importance to the nation—are being drafted by people whose vocabulary and mental outlook differs profoundly from that of those who left school at 14—i.e., 80 per cent. of the population.

But even if you left school when you were 22, some aspects of the present crisis must inevitably bewilder. Thus a study of all the Sunday papers shows the most extraordinary contradictions, the most obvious guesswork extending over whole front pages, interlarded with phrases like these from the front page of the *Sunday Graphic*, which proudly advertises itself as containing FOURTEEN PAGES OF CRISIS NEWS AND PICTURES:

> There was no official information obtainable last night about the details of the proposals Sir Nevile Henderson brought with him from Berlin. But the general impression is that Germany's suggested basis . . . The French reply to Hitler, based on M. Daladier's broadcast speech, is understood to consist of two points. . . . No official news is available about the nature of the plan which was brought . . .

On Monday the lack of information continued. The papers had covered their pages with hypothesis, conjuring up all sorts of "authorities" and opinions, and were helped out by being able to front-page a MYSTERY MAN and a MYSTERY PLANE.

For this they have been heavily and publicly censored. On Sunday night the B.B.C.—caught in the same net of non-information—gave as its most emphatic news item: "The reports that have appeared in the Press are entirely unauthorised and quite inaccurate"; and on Tuesday the Premier in the Commons was even more severe; "There is one thing I would like to say at the moment with regard to the Press . . . . It is necessary once more to urge the Press to exercise the utmost restraint." He went on to describe how a small news item "perhaps not of particular importance," might "wreck the whole of the efforts which are being made." It was unfortunate, he said, that journalists should take such responsibility upon themselves, which affected not only themselves but inhabitants of all countries of the world.

It seems doubtful whether politicians are fully aware of the harm they do to the public interest by first leaving the Press entirely in the dark and then castigating it for groping for the light. They don't seem to realise that the daily Press must say something, both for its own prestige and because the public—in spite of the politicians—demands information and primarily depends on the Press for it. In our investigations during last September's crisis, we found newspapers easily the first of the influences on which people said they based their opinion. In an investigation which we have just completed in a London Borough into the reasons why 1,000 A.R.P. Wardens volunteered, the Press again came easily first as the influence to which Wardens attributed their decision for joining. And, in one of Elmo Roper's American surveys published in *Fortune* this month, a very largely majority give the Press as the source of most of their news. In no case is the radio given as dominant influence by more than a quarter of the people sampled.

Some light is thrown on this situation by 3 samples, done among working-class people *only* (with usual correct sex proportions) in the same area of London on three days during the last week.

	Percentage who say they don't know what to think about the news at all
August 22nd	40 per cent.
" 23rd	45 "
" 28th	49 "

By attacking the Press, the Government increases the doubts which it is trying to dispel, both at home and abroad. Instead of tackling its own problem of making the public feel that it has taken it into its confidence even at moments of

crisis, it puts the blame on the most important distributors of information, and so saps the confidence of the millions of working people, for whom the Press *is* the written word. This does not help either Press or government. Public morale can only be maintained if the public can feel it is encouraged by its elected government to ask intelligent questions and get intelligible answers. MASS-OBSERVATION

LITTLE THINGS

IT was reported the other day that a great many listeners have been complaining about the half-hour devoted every evening by the B.B.C. to the news bulletin in German and have been demanding its removal to an earlier part of the programme and to be given dance music instead. This news at a first glance seems shocking. It is almost incredible that at a time when the European situation might at any moment burst into flames, a large number of people should be ready to hamper the B.B.C. in what is obviously an effort to help to prevent the catastrophe, all because they cannot do without their dance music. They remind one of the people who were writing to the papers some time ago complaining of the noise aeroplanes made in their neighbourhood and suggesting that they should be sent to practise somewhere else where they would not interfere with the amenities of a hitherto peaceful district.

Shocking though this self-centredness is, however, it is fairly human. I doubt whether there was ever a situation so grave that men and women addicted to petty grievances were able for long to forget them. There were certainly plenty of grumblers during the last war. I remember staying in a Surrey cottage in 1917, where the landlady was a perfect Stoic on hearing bad news from the Front, but almost fell in a fit through rage when she heard that sugar was going to be rationed and how small a quantity she herself was to be allowed. "It's a disgryce!" she said, and, as she thought of all her coupon would enable her to buy, she added contemptuously: "I'd rather do without." But she didn't do without. She "did with," like the rest of us.

Her attitude to air-raids on London was dependent on the way in which they affected her own convenience. Sometimes they made the trains from town an hour or so late, and, as one of her lodgers came by train every evening, this meant that dinner would also be late. "Another hair-ryde," she would announce, after the news had reached the village. "Isn't it awful? Mr. G—— will be lyte agyne. I've got dinner ready, and now it will be all spoiled. It don't do any good to food to be kept waiting like that. Makes you think it's not worth all the trouble you've taken to cook it. Dear, dear! Isn't it awful!" And, by the time Mr. G—— arrived, careworn and starving, she seemed to have almost convinced herself that he in some way was responsible for the air-raid. She scowled at him, and made it clear that to arrive home an hour late for dinner was behaviour for which there were no excuses even in war-time. Air-raids were all very well, but they must not be allowed to interfere with her daily routine.

She was trivial-minded, no doubt, but our lives are largely made up of trifles—trifles that irritate us and trifles that give us pleasure. However serious the news in the daily papers may be, we have still time to feel irritated by the fact that the mustard-pot on the breakfast-table is empty or pleased by the discovery later in the day of how excellent a vegetable is the runner bean from our own garden. The pleasures of taste are not, to my mind, among the great pleasures of life, but how engrossing they are in their triviality! I met a man who was greatly depressed about the world the other day, but at dinner he forgot the world in contemplation of a meat-pie. "What a lovely pie!" he murmured at the first taste of it. I often feel pleasure of the same kind in the flavour of a perfectly boiled potato. How everything else is forgotten, too, for a moment at least, as the teeth crush the juices out of a cool crisp lettuce! Sometimes, finding how much I enjoy such things, I begin to wonder whether those gourmets are not right who hold that a taste in food is one of the serious things in life. May not the emotion felt by a gourmet over a beautiful dish be akin, after all, to the emotion felt by a reader over beautiful verse?

Questions of this kind have often been raised; but on the whole the sense of taste has won little reverence except from a minority. It is generally held to be a loftier emotion to enjoy seeing a thing than to enjoy tasting it. A poet gazing with delight at an apple-tree is supposed to be having a spiritual experience, but a poet eating an apple is looked on as a man indulging in merely animal pleasures. This distinction, it seems to me, is not easy to defend. Why is it nobler to admire the beauty of a peach than to eat it? I do not at the moment know the answer.

Most of us, I imagine, get more pleasure from looking at things than from eating things. We can forget the day's news, not only in contemplation of a meat-pie, but even more completely in contemplation of a bird or a butterfly. During the week-end, I had to lay down my detective story several times to look at the martins that were tumbling in showers above the pond. How impossible it was, too, to keep one's eyes off them as they settled in tribes on the four wires leading from the electric grid! It is true that I did not watch them for overlong, for I was anxious to discover who had committed the murder on the golf-course. That is the worst of reading a detective story in the open air. It is too insistent in its claims on one's attention. It is easier to take one's eyes off the roses and the lavender than off the printed page. That is why I think books should never be taken into the open air. They come between us and the sea and the hills and the countenance of Nature. Yet no detective story in the world can give us so much pleasure as the sight of a file of rowan trees with red berries hanging from them in multitudes in August. Why, then, do we waste our time on detective stories? It must be that we are incorrigible triflers.

Certainly, it would be impossible for most of us to spend all day even during a week-end experiencing great emotions and thinking great thoughts. We should get exhausted if we allowed ourselves no reading lower than Dante or Milton. As for philosophy, we can go no deeper into it than up to our knees. Its problems merely baffle us the deeper we get in them, and, with no more than a working philosophy for ordinary life, we return eagerly to the trivialities of the shore. It is with a sense of relief that we abandon the question "What is truth?" for the more homely question "Why are the seats at Lord's so uncomfortable?" This is a question that has been raised during the crisis in several letters to the press, and I suppose the answer is that those seats made of slats recover from the effects of rain more quickly than would seats more luxurious. Seats at all sports-grounds, however—even seats under cover—seem to have been devised to cause the spectator the maximum of discomfort. Even the tip-up seats at Twickenham crush a fat man into a space that is barely enough for a lean one; and, wherever you go to see a game you are expected, unless you hire a cushion, to sit on the hardest of hard wood. The powerful hold that sport has on the modern man is shown by the readiness with which hundreds of thousands of men endure all the miseries of sitting on wood in order to see a few of their fellows knocking or kicking or throwing a ball about.

But it is not only grievances about uncomfortable seats at Lord's that have found utterance during the crisis. A citizen who has recently served as a juryman declares that it is even a more seat-searing experience to sit on a jury than to watch a game of cricket at Lord's. He says that, as it was a cold day, he was wearing an overcoat, "but," he adds, "the discomfort of sitting on a hard wooden seat without cushions is a thing I shall long remember. The magistrate and members of the court appeared to be very comfortable, but 'sitting on the bench' for the members of the jury was not so comfortable. For a week afterwards I remembered it as I sat down to luncheon or dinner." Even during a crisis such a

heart-cry wrings the heart. The complaint may seem trivial, but, if you are sitting on wood all day, it is the little things that matter. Especially if you are lean. The authorities, I said to myself, as I read of this traditional form of torture, should look to it, and see that jurymen are seated as comfortably as cinema-goers.

I turned from the woes of jurymen to another letter on the charmingly trivial question whether Clements Lane in the City of London should be spelt with or without an apostrophe. The writer quoted authorities for saying "with," but admitted that the Post Office Directory "declines to agree." I do not seriously mind, but I should mind very seriously indeed, if, when I wrote "Mr. H. G. Wells's new book" a printer made me say "Mr. H. G. Wells' new book." An apostrophe can for a fleeting moment become the most important thing in the world to a man who is pedantic in such matters. As for the printer who makes me say "an hotel" when I have written "a hotel," he makes me feel that the universe is rocking. Being like that, how can I find fault with the triviality of the people who want to push aside the news bulletin in German in order to make way for dance music in these serious times? Y. Y.

NERVES

I THINK I'll get a paper,
I think I'd better wait.
I'll hear the news at six o'clock,
That's much more up to date.

It's just like last September,
Absurd how time stands still;
They're bound to make a statement.
I don't suppose they will.

I think I'd better stroll around.
Perhaps it's best to stay.
I think I'll have a whisky neat,
I can't this time of day.

I think I'll have another smoke.
I don't know what to do.
I promised to ring someone up,
I can't remember who.

They say it's been averted.
They say we're on the brink.
I'll wait for the "New Statesman,"
I wonder what they think.

They're shouting. It's a Special.
It's not. It's just street cries.
I think the heat is frightful.
God damn these bloody flies.

I see the nation's keeping cool,
The public calm is fine.
This crisis can't shake England's nerves. . . .
It's playing hell with mine.

SAGITTARIUS

Miscellany

THE TROUBLESOME CORPSE

By MICHAEL ZOSHCHENKO

AN old man in our town happened to fall into a lethargic sleep.

A year or two ago he had had night-blindness. But he soon recovered from that, and even began to come out into the communal kitchen where he liked to argue with other tenants about cultural problems.

Then, quite unexpectedly, he fell into a lethargic sleep.

That happened a few weeks ago. One morning his relatives woke and saw that he was lying still, and showing no signs of life. His pulse had stopped beating, his chest wasn't rising, and the looking-glass remained clear when they held it to his mouth.

Naturally, they concluded that the old man had died quietly in his sleep, and of course they hastened to make various arrangements.

They hurried on with their arrangements because they, the whole family, lived in one small room, in a communal flat, and they had nowhere to put the body. They were packed like sardines in their one room. Naturally, they had to hurry.

I must tell you that this old man had been living with his relatives: a daughter, a son-in-law, a grandchild and a nurse. The parents had to have a nurse for their child because they both went to work. And the nurse was little more than a child herself—just a kid of sixteen. All of them were naturally upset by this unexpected surprise: a dead body in their room—an altogether superfluous object.

There it was lying, looking as fresh as a withered flower, demanding that it should be attended to at once. At once, because its presence in a room occupied by a whole family was very embarrassing. The child was howling. The nurse was trembling with fear, and saying that she wouldn't live in the room with a corpse. Naturally, the silly girl liked being alive, and imagined that life had no end. She was afraid of corpses, silly little fool.

The husband, the head of the family, ran straight to the government undertakers. And soon he came running back.

"Everything's in order," he says. "The only hitch is the horses. We can have the hearse straight away. But they don't promise the horses before the end of the week."

The wife says: "That's what I had expected. You always quarrelled with my father when he was alive, and now of course you won't do him a good turn. You can't even get horses for him."

"You go to the devil," said the husband. "I'm not a cavalry officer, I can't produce horses out of my hat. Do you think I'm glad we have to wait so long? Or that I get much pleasure out of staring at your father?"

All sorts of family scenes took place then. The child, unaccustomed to corpses, howled at the top of his voice. And the nurse refused to work for a family who kept a dead person in their room.

Then the wife, sick of the row, went off to the undertakers herself; but soon came back, pale as a sheet.

"They won't promise the horses until the middle of next week," she says. "If this surviving fool, my husband, had put his name down for them, we would have had them in three days' time. As for the hearse, it's true, we can have it straight away."

And she promptly dressed the child, grabbed the whimpering nurse, and left for the country, where she meant to stay with friends.

"I must think of my child first of all," she says. "I have no right to expose him to such tragic spectacles at such an early age. You can do what you like."

The husband says: "I'm not going to stay with him. You can say what you please. He isn't my old man. I didn't like him much alive, and now I find him quite disgusting to share a room with. I shall either put him outside in the passage, or shall go to my brother's. The old man can wait here for his horses by himself."

So the wife with the child and nurse cleared off to the country, and the husband went to his brother's place.

But just then the whole of his brother's family had got diphtheria, and they wouldn't let the poor fellow in. He had to come back to his room again.

So he clapped the old man on to a narrow kitchen table, moved the table into the passage by the bathroom door, then shut himself in his room, and for two days did not answer any knocks or shouts.

Naturally, there was a frightful row, and absolute chaos

in the communal flat. The tenants raised a terrible hullabaloo and commotion.

Women and children refused to go to the lavatory, saying they could not go past the body without taking fright.

Then the men seized the table with the body and carried it out into the lobby, where it naturally aroused panic and embarrassment among the visitors to the flat.

One tenant, a manager of a co-operative shop, declared that he often had women visitors for some reason, and that he could not take responsibility for their mental health if this state of things went on.

A meeting of the House Committee was urgently called, but even they could not find any rational solution to the problem. It was suggested that the body should be moved out into the courtyard. But the President of the Committee declared that this might cause a morbid agitation among the surviving tenants, and possibly a falling-off in the payment of rent, which had already been overdue in many cases.

The tenants shouted and threatened the owner of the body, who was sitting tight behind his locked door, and was occupied in burning the old man's rubbishy possessions.

Then they decided to open the door by force and insert the whole affair back into the room.

They began to shout again, and the table got pushed about. Suddenly, the deceased let out a faint sigh, and stirred a little.

Some confusion and a minor panic ensued. But soon the tenants adapted themselves to the situation.

They rushed at the door of the room, knocking and calling out that the old man was alive, and wanted to come in.

But the fellow who had shut himself inside did not answer for some time. After an hour's complete silence he said at last:

"I should drop these stupid tricks if I were you. You won't catch me out that way."

After long negotiations he agreed to open if the old man gave tongue to indicate that it wasn't a fraud.

The old man, who entirely lacked imagination, said in quavering tones: "Ho! ho!" And his son-in-law refused to accept this as a sufficient proof because he could not recognise the voice.

At last he agreed to have a look at the body through the key-hole if the table were placed opposite the door. But even then he would not admit that the old man was alive, and said that the tenants were moving the body's arms and legs on the sly.

Finally, the old man, at the end of his patience, began to shout and swear violently as he used to when alive, which induced his son-in-law to open the door, and let him into the room.

After some wrangling and arguing about various things, the old man, now very much alive, noticed suddenly that his possessions had gone, and that some of them were still smouldering in the stove. Neither was the camp-bed, on which he died, in the room any more.

So, with the impudence characteristic of his age, the old man lay down on the young couple's double bed and demanded to be served with food and drink. As he ate and drank, he continued to grumble, saying that he would sue his son-in-law for destroying his stuff, and that being a relative of his wasn't an extenuating circumstance.

Soon the daughter of the old man came back from the country. She screamed with fright and joy. The child, not yet conversant with the facts of biology, accepted his grandpa's resurrection with equanimity. But the nurse, the sixteen-year-old little fool, again protested, saying she would not work for a family where persons were now dead and now alive again.

On the ninth day after all this a white hearse arrived suddenly. It had torches on it, and was drawn by a black horse with blinkers.

The husband was at that moment sitting by the window and saw it first.

"Here you are, Father," says he. "The hearse has come for you."

The old man began to spit with anger, and said he wasn't going to go anywhere. He even opened the window and spat into the street, shouting to the driver to go away at once and stop offending people's sight by his horrible appearance.

The driver, wearing a white coat and a yellow top hat, got tired of waiting for the body, came upstairs and started swearing. He demanded that he should have what he had come for, instead of being kept waiting in the cold.

But the tenants turned out in a body to protect the old man, and kicked the driver down the stairs, yellow top hat and all.

For a long time the driver would not leave the street, clamouring that at least he should be given a tip, and that somebody should sign his receipt for him. But after an exchange of more curses and threats with the old man, who was shaking his fist at him through the window, he went away in the end.

For a time, peace and quiet reigned in the communal flat. Then the old man caught a cold through sitting by the open window, and a fortnight later really died.

No one would believe it at first, thinking that the old man was playing the fool as before. However, a doctor was called and assured everyone that this time there was no fraud.

This produced complete confusion and panic among the tenants of the place. Many locked their rooms and moved out to wherever they could go.

The daughter of the old man, too scared even to inquire about the hearse, left for the country at once, together with the child and the nurse. Her husband, this ineffective head of the family, thought of applying for a place in a Rest Home.

This time, though, the hearse arrived, unexpectedly, on the second day. And everything went off very nicely.

(Translated by ELISAVETA FEN.)

EXILES IN POLAND

IT is 4.30 a.m., and although I got to bed only at 2, I cannot sleep. It has been the same the last four mornings. For I have spent four days visiting the "collectives" in Cracow where the refugees from Czechoslovakia—Czechs, Slovaks, and Germans and Austrians who were already refugees in Czechoslovakia—are "living."

There were some 600 in Cracow when I was there. (There were 800 more in Katowice.) The worst place I found was a "room" above a herring market, where the political refugees are living under conditions no farmer would allow for his cattle. The stench of herring *en masse* is bad enough when one gets only a whiff of it in passing; these people—doctors, professors, artists, journalists, cartoonists, lawyers, etc.—have had it day and night for about four months.

In this room I found 69 men, women and children. There are cots for about 35; the rest sleep on straw mattresses on the floor. I saw a man and his wife and their two children trying to sleep on two straw mattresses pushed together on the floor. One or two have stuffed "pillows" with dried corn leaves. Not one has bed linen; not all have even covering. There is one toilet for the entire group. Facilities for keeping clean consist of three old-fashioned granite basins.

There is not a chair in the place. One wooden bench seats about five people if they sit close, another about four. Sitting on one's mattresses or standing up for a whole day gets pretty tiresome; that's what these people have to do, say when it rains and they cannot go out (an umbrella is a luxury under more than one kind of circumstance).

Illness is also a luxury here, for there are not the simplest medicaments. The tabs of cotton, small quantities of iodine, zinc oxide, etc., that I was able to give them at the end of a long journey, were received with a degree of gratitude that made me squirm. But for instance: A man who had been in a concentration camp suffered a severe nervous breakdown on reaching Cracow (like most of the others, on foot) and was delirious for two nights and two days. The doctors, as much concerned about the loss of sleep the other residents were

suffering as about the man himself, were unable to quiet him because there wasn't available even a single dose of sedative medicine. Nor is that all; the director of the relief committee was ill himself when I was there, and in order to have the doctor's prescription filled, the director's secretary had to leave her gold necklace as a deposit.

The business manager of the political exiles, which includes many more than those living in the herring place, was once a millionaire in Prague. As I sat with the committee which examines the men and women who have just come over the border, he came tearing into the room in great agitation. That morning he had been able to serve coffee to only a fraction of his charges; for lunch there was nothing at all—not so much as a crust of bread. He had been running around Cracow from 7.30 a.m., begging of merchants, and by eleven o'clock he had succeeded in getting exactly fifty zlotys—a trifle over two pounds—for which, even with the miracles of cooking that refugee committees can perform, he could scarcely feed several hundred people! He had also been begging for leather, because eighty people had practically no shoe soles left; he had secured enough to mend three pairs! And so on and on, nothing but indescribable misery for these men and women who had lived comfortable and useful lives.

Another group live in a sort of workers' meeting place. Their mattresses are spread all over the entertainment hall and on the stage thereof. They have a kitchen, presided over by a former hotel chef, and they, men and women alike, do their laundry out in a court yard. There is very little to wash, but what there is has to be washed often, because practically all of the refugees came over the border with no clothes but what they were then wearing. I talked to one school teacher from the Carpatho-Russian part of Czechoslovakia who had been roused at night and was dumped across the border in her nightgown and a smock. She had shortened the nightgown into a slip, and she still lives, day and night, in these two garments. I also saw the scars, all over her body, from the beatings she had received.

Here, in this second place, there are more lice than in the other; there is no money at all to buy disinfectants or exterminating agents. That no epidemic of disease has broken out is a tribute to the desperate efforts the people make to overcome these appalling conditions. This particular group, like the *Wirtschaftsflüchtlinge* who are temporarily (and much more comfortably) housed in a quite new home for aged and jobless Polish citizens, have been notified that when the chill autumn winds begin to blow these shelters will have to be relinquished in favour of destitute Poles. Perhaps if they all have to squeeze into the herring place and stand close, they can generate a little heat, for the herring place will not even have a stove for heating!

That these excellent men and women, dumped into exile by other countries, should have to live thus is an international disgrace. The Polish Government has, of course, allowed them to stay (not all—some have been sent back over the border), but it has done nothing else, and it expects to have other countries receive them after a brief sojourn in Poland. The attitude of "other countries" toward the refugee question is of course an old and wretched story.

The British Committee, the only one doing anything at all (except that the American Joint Distribution Committee has contributed some funds), is not a relief committee, and is able to look after only those persons who are acceptable for emigration to England—a very small percentage. Unfortunately the Polish Government has not realised that most of these professional people could become useful servants of the state. It may do so yet. Also, other countries may become more generous about accepting refugees. But in the meantime hundreds of first-rate human beings are forced to live under scandalous conditions. Soon the other hundreds from Katowice may also be in Cracow. And let me not forget to add that the day I was in Katowice thirty of the refugees living in the collective there were ill from the tainted meat they had eaten the day before.

Anybody sensitive to human misery and to human worth who has not yet contributed to the relief of the victims of international cowardice or callousness or whatever one cares to call it, could really serve human decency by sending just a little money for these forgotten refugees from Czechoslovakia now living in Poland. The miracle is that, almost starving and almost naked, and soon to be cold as well, they have not resorted to petty thievery. Actually their spirit in these trying circumstances is something marvellous to behold. What they are doing to keep up their own morale, through organised study courses, wall newspapers, excursions to museums and art galleries and churches, is, however, another story. Right now they need food and clothes and medicine—or there may be no morale to keep up. Help is needed at once.

CLARA LEISER

PRELUDE TO A JOURNEY

It's not enough, the journey to the coast,
For always there's another coast beyond:
Nights are not long enough to hold the ghost,
The days too short to bind the vagabond.
The sea is arrows to the Bombay shore:
Open the vast and panoramic East:
Or westwards is it where the winds restore
The wish for freedom that lies buried in the beast.
O, let the mountains fall and the seas be shallow
And the great trees force gaps into the sky:
Here what is known is the dictionary of sorrow:
Let these words break towards eternity.

Our dreams are sailors where no seas are:
China's not more extreme, where war descends,
Than promised lands that lean towards their sight,
Far beyond bays where disenchanting dawn
Breaks with ironic light what strength sleep lends.

No. Do not move. Sleep on my stranger here
And let the sweet waltz play that rocks
The gentle bed: and this the Spanish serenade
Wake once again the midnight ball, the frocks
That glistened in the mirrors of a past decade.
For this is dead: although the cherished past
Its crisp, romantic images portrays,
We are, like Tantalus, by weeping Time betrayed.

O play the glittering fountains of the heart.
Here music ends. Let us still go on,
Beyond the demarcation of each coast
Which like a barrier defends the day.
There's further yet. Desert the wavering ships:
Ignore the precise courage of the planes:
Go where the music pointed when it played,
Or where the song suggests, that from despair
Beats out its praises everywhere.

H. B. MALLALIEU

AT THE "PROMS"

THE first batch of new compositions to have been presented at the Promenade concerts included two new songs by Benjamin Britten entitled *Illuminations*, being settings for voice and string orchestra of two poems by Artur Rimbaud. The first, "Devant une neige," struck my fancy immediately, it was so delicately and justly scored, so successful a musical evocation of the spirit of the words. It also had an individual style and was not one of those imitations of the French impressionistic manner of the 'twenties to which so many of Mr. Britten's British predecessors had succumbed. The second poem "Marine" was almost equally successful. I was much heartened by this latest product of Mr. Britten's talent, for it showed that he is making a genuine personal development and is not merely content to go along using the slightly trick

assurance and cleverness which his earlier compositions have shown that he possesses in plenty.

It was immediately followed by another new work, this by Mr. Arthur Bliss, his first Concerto for pianoforte and orchestra played by Solomon with an aplomb rivalling that with which it was composed. Mr. Bliss has had a striking success in his ballet *Checkmate* and there has always been a forcefulness in his music which was in itself refreshing. It was the evidently promising thing about his earliest works but then we did not know whether this forcefulness was the punch of real power or something else. Do we know now, even, that Mr. Bliss is—well, I was going on to say a mature composer and not merely a composer of mature age? I confess to a doubt. Is this forcefulness not too much a part of the general blatancy of the age? There is aggression in it but no richness—unless I am mistaken. And it is of this age because both the most recent major compositions of our two chief musical composers are also full of it. I refer to the Vaughan Williams and the Walton symphonies. One must acknowledge the talent of both these composers who represent respectively the best of their two generations; but is it just because it strikes no confirming note in my judgment that I cannot join in the general applause which has greeted these two large scale and almost overpowering compositions? Personally, I think Vaughan Williams's Symphony, which was played on Thursday, August 24th, a triumph of nullity, by which I mean that it only shows what talent and virtuosity can contrive to bring about and how empty of real content this impressive display of force can be. If Walton's Symphony has to my ears a more genuine character than Vaughan Williams's, it is only because it is more personal and expresses at least an individually felt vain effort. There is a certain actual violence felt, not merely willed, in the Walton symphony, as well as a determined and sustained intellectual effort to carry it off, whereas there is only the latter to my mind in the other work.

Now Mr. Bliss is much more light-hearted than either of these composers. He does not force himself; he is naturally blatant, using the word without a derogatory tone. Even the technique of his writing has more of the character of improvisation than composition. There is also, in the first movement, particularly of his new Pianoforte Concerto an ease suggestive of an unexpectedly happy control and development of his material. Mr. Bliss has learnt something, I should say, from Sibelius and in this first movement, which was undeniably effective, he gave promise of having written a concerto which both pianists and audiences would welcome. But, alas! the first movement was much the best part of the work. In the last movement he failed to do again what he had done in the first, in spite of much recourse to rhythmic patterned reiterations in the style, but not with the cunning of the Finnish master, while the Adagietto was slight and trifled away one's interest in the work. I should like to pay a tribute to Mr. Bliss's sparing use of the "brass" in this concerto.

On the following Friday a new Concertino Pastorale for strings by Mr. John Ireland was heard for the first time. I can only put myself in the small category of those for whom solid dullness is a matter for respect and say that Mr. Ireland has my respect, but he does not give me any pleasure. Perhaps, however, my feelings were inhibited by the spectacle of a tall formidable clergyman who stood upright close to me during the whole time Mr. Ireland's work was being played and looked fiercely around as if to say: "Who dares to think that this is not very good?" I certainly did not dare to think so, and I did think that Mr. Ireland's music has the merit of not being either contemptible or ill-made. And even if one regrets that it has not a little more sparkle and grace one can recognise its decency, honesty and lack of pretentiousness.

I should like to say a word or two on other matters. I want to congratulate Mr. Maurice Cole on a very fine performance of Beethoven's C major pianoforte Concerto in which he played Beethoven's own cadenzas. The great cadenza Beethoven wrote for the first movement of this concerto is a masterpiece of baroque fantasy. Mr. Cole played it as if he understood it. That alone is a real achievement, but it was on a plane with his playing all through. Then I should like to draw attention to the strange fact exemplified in the Tchaikovsky concert of August 19th that a composer can be in one work (the poor insubstantial Violin Concerto) little better than a hack academic musician and in another (the 6th symphony) an artist of real creative genius. Whether we like the nature of this genius or not is another matter.

W. J. TURNER

THE MOVIES

Professor Mamlock. Academy
Bachelor Mother. Tivoli

Professor Mamlock is a queer film. "1933" says a title at the beginning and one is immediately whirled into one of those mysterious meetings which held up the action of the Soviet Films of the twenties—the time lag is complete, one sees again as if by some sudden mental trick of total recall those shiny imitation leather coats, those seedy woollies, the wild gestures and grimaces of the silent films. The camera technique is astonishing, of the epoch of *Die Niebelungen*, *The Cabinet of Dr. Cagliari*, scurried awkward sequences connect one "composed" picture with another and the compositions are as false and obvious as living statuary at the circus. The women make one gasp with their mascaraed eyes like holes in the make-up plastered faces, they are the same incredible dolls who watched the bombardment of Paris from the hills of St. Cloud in *Babylon;* their clothes beggar description, ratty little knitted ties, jumpers with double rows of bows up the front, amazing hats. Even the automobiles are wrong; the lorries have something of the Slav about them, old, old, Buicks and Lincolns masquerade unconvincingly as the shiny black Mercedes machines which float the party Bonzes about their affairs. All this one might forget if the passion with which the story is told were sincere; it would be no more annoying than a regional accent. But one knows that the carnival which followed the burning of the Reichstag was hailed with delight by *Imprecorr*, and that this indignation at the break up of a bourgeois Doctor's home and professional life is something that has been turned on like a tap. And similar reflections occur with the development of the story; the factory meeting at which Professor Mamlock's son appeals for a United Front antedates the Reichstag fire and thus falls in the period when Nazis and Communists co-operated in agitation against Social-Democratic municipal and provincial governments; the house-to-house raids must have provoked a certain distress in the minds of those Russians who lived through the raids on which they were modelled, and the scene in which a group of women in a milk queue tease a political policeman for his good clothes and his well-fed look must have pleased the people who have plenty of opportunity to admire the footwear of the Ogpu. Perhaps because the attack on persecution and brutality comes from such a tainted source it loses most of its force. One hates the underground organiser with his hearty Groupers manner and his pearly Odol smile as much as anybody, even the villainous Nazi Commissar. The Nazi is guilty of the death of the Professor, the smiler is responsible for the waste of his son who is left at the end of the film on the roof of a building surrounded by armed men. The film is moving and one feels sick at the end with the brilliant surgeon dead on a balcony, the skilled bacteriologist waiting for it on the roof: two useful men have been spoilt in a fight between degrading factions. Perhaps it is a mistake to consider a film—an entertainment—from this angle, but this one is about ideas and they ring false like a lead half-crown.

Bachelor Mother is a delightful farce, a pleasant escape from the closing cycle of crazy comedies with no shouting quarrels, no bad manners, no cruelty. Ginger Rogers picks up a baby on the steps of a Foundling Hospital and is landed with it; she carries it in and it has time to like her smell and her looks; when they take it out of her arms it cries. "It isn't mine, I

never saw it before," she says; and they smile kindly, "We're your friends here." Kindly and firmly they force it back on her, her philanthropic employers take a part in saddling her with it: at the end of the day when she marries the boss's son he still thinks it's hers and broadmindedly and sweetly brushes aside her protestations. It's a very funny film, the dialogue is good, the minor roles are well played and Mr. David Niven acts well with Miss Rogers who is more attractive than ever. The film may be a drug, but it's a soothing drug and a lot preferable to hashish administered to make you feel happy about killing people who have got into the hands of the wrong party organisers. ANTHONY WEST

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Spotted Dick," at the Aldwych

Once again Mr. Robertson Hare and Mr. Alfred Drayton combine to give us a Spot of Bother. The fact that the plot is as rambling as it is silly, matters not a jot. Mr. Hare is his same laughworthy self—just to hear him say "Oh! Dear!" is alone worth a visit to the theatre. Deprived of his trousers and his money, he loses none of a birdlike dignity. As the grossly imposed on Uncle Charlie, he is regarded by his sister and her husband (Joyce Barbour and Alfred Drayton) as a never failing goldmine, and is expected to make good their gambling debts and finance hair-brained racing schemes. Amongst other things, he becomes involved in the defrauding of an insurance company through a faked jewel robbery. The dialogue is of the crosstalk variety, mainly depending for its humour on *doubles entendres*. Guy Middleton makes a convincing cad; while Alfred Drayton is of course, as soapily plausible as ever. It would be unfair to expect any farce to provide more than an amusing evening. And *Spotted Dick* certainly does that.

THE COMING WEEK

SUNDAY, September 3rd—
Three Choirs Festival, Hereford Cathedral. Till September 8th.
"Death at Jacob's Corner," Duchess.
MONDAY, September 4th—
Russian Ballet Season opens, Covent Garden Opera House. Till September 16th.
First performance in England of Three Pictures for Flute, Strings and Percussion by Eugène Goossens, Promenade Concert, Queens Hall, 8.
TUESDAY, September 5th—
"Music at Night," Westminster.

Correspondence

GERMAN-SOVIET PACT

SIR,—May I recommend to those whose sentiments have not altogether blinded their political judgment a reading or re-reading of Wheeler-Bennett's *Brest-Litovsk: The Forgotten Peace*? It will, I think, enable them to understand Soviet diplomacy in a mid-war situation and to realise the vital necessity for getting a government that can utilise the potentialities (split in the Axis, etc.) of the new position, as well as concluding an Anglo-Soviet Pact.
Llanor, North Wales. STEPHEN SWINGLER

SIR,—Now that the first panic interpretations have blown over may I point out certain facts concerning the Soviet-German Pact? Though I write this before having Molotov's speech before me, I feel the following points will hold good anyway.

(1) Has Russia betrayed the "Peace Front"?—No, because there was and could be *no* Peace Front before the Danzig crisis came to a head. Mr. Strang had stopped negotiations without agreeing to guarantee countries against indirect aggression, and the military talks had reached deadlock because Poland refused to allow the U.S.S.R. effectively to help it.

(2) What is the next best alternative to going without a "Peace Front"? Clearly, I think, to wreck the "War Front."

For years Russia had offered non-aggression pacts to all countries. For years Hitler had rejected this offer. Now Hitler accepts, abandons the anti-Comintern Pact, wrecks the Axis and exposes himself to all his ideological friends as being a mere imperialist adventurer, not the champion of ideological war at all. The real effect of the Pact is seen in the fact that British citizens in China can now walk peacefully without fear of being stripped by the Japanese: Moscow has done with a stroke of the pen what Chamberlain had failed to do at all.

(3) Is the possibility of a real Peace Front now out of the question? In my view, definitely no. The Soviets have undertaken not to enter any agreement directed against Germany, but they have always pointed out that a pact of mutual assistance was open to all to join and was directed against no State in particular.

I am convinced that if Lord Halifax flew to-morrow to Moscow and asked for a formula he would get one. Then the Peace Front would be made real, on top of the Soviet-German Pact.

Unfortunately, our Government, as in 1918, is saying it is better to be defeated by Germany than to be victorious with Russia as our ally. It is urgently necessary that every British democrat should to-day, in every possible way, demand that the Government reopen negotiations with Moscow. PAT SLOAN

SIR,—I was amused at your reception of the Russo-German pact. Not one single word anywhere of disgust or decent indignation; not one word of passing reproof to, or dissent from, what is I suppose one of the most flagrant instances of double-dealing in modern times. I thought for a moment—but no longer—that it was coming when I read the sentence beginning "We search our minds . . . but find no parallel" . . . for it seemed to promise encouragement, but no! that particular reproof was levelled at this country. How you managed to ride off the subject with a conscience I, for the life of me, cannot understand. Evidently it is, with you, "My Russia, right or wrong," but do not, I beg of you, delude yourself further with the idea that you are an unprejudiced commentator. FREDERICK SHARP
3 Paper Buildings,
Temple, E.C.

SIR,—As one who has stuck to THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION since those hectic days which marked the closing stages of the last war, I would like to express my personal appreciation of the sanity which you have been so consistently preaching these recent troubled years.

And at this present time, with the sense of frustration uppermost, I beg of you by every means in your power to continue to recommend the only sane course for this country in particular and Europe in general to adopt. The road ahead of us may be difficult, but the ultimate outcome is surely secure. F. S. LEWIS
Ridgeway,
80 Monkhams Avenue,
Woodford Green, Essex.

LABOUR AND WAR

SIR,—Mr. Laski says that there are only two alternatives if we fail to discuss in a world conference the problems of Europe: war now or war after another useless instalment of "appeasement." But what if we fail to bring about a conference? Does Labour base its whole hope for peace on the convoking of this conference? And if there is no conference, does Labour say, in effect, "The one piece of evidence that the Government might have given of constructive peaceful vision it has not given. Since there is to be no conference the only alternative is to fight. We will enter a War Cabinet"? The 400 to 4 vote in the Commons on Thursday in effect made that statement. A conference is a slender, almost wishful, hope now, and a wish for it is hardly to dissociate one from the Government's policy of blind resistance. Is there no alternative policy which, through a thoroughgoing analysis of political, ideological *and* economic Europe, can expose why we have drifted from profound war weariness to new war preparedness, can expose the error that has led Labour's policy to become all but indistinguishable from the Government's, and can offer a new basis of belief and endeavour, if not of hope? I believe there is an alternative.

The term "appeasement" has been used to swallow up a Socialist attitude which is fundamentally opposed to both Government policies and provides a clear policy in opposition.

First, this attitude sees war as the supreme catastrophe. Most are agreed that it would end at least European civilisation, i.e., for example, the fate of the Polish people *under* Hitler could not be worse than their fate drawn up *against* his military machine.

It follows, therefore, that even the domination of Europe by one power is preferable to general conflict. Many say otherwise: M. Etienne Mantoux wrote to the *Manchester Guardian*, "A totalitarian domination of Europe . . . would mean the inevitable destruction of that moral capital of our civilisation," and, "A new war would perhaps destroy civilisation, but Nazi domination of Europe must destroy it." I submit that a totalitarian domination of Europe would *either* succeed in the economic unification of Europe and its totalitarian nature would dissolve as the *raison d'etre* of its dynamic—the enlargement of its economic unit—was achieved; *or*, failing to administer economic unification, would again disintegrate into national states, as in 1815 and 1919. Further I submit that the capital of our civilisation is based on our material and art cultures which are rooted in their real performers. A social conception such as democracy is not a philosopher's abstraction which might get lost; it is conceived in the minds of the suppressed and will be born again wherever there is suppression. We should rather fear the mis-direction or total destruction of our material basis of life through war than the subservience of our theorists to tyranny. Previous civilisations have been destroyed by war, while tyrannies give place before mightier social movements.

Secondly, this attitude would not attempt to appease Hitler; it is not interested in the whereabouts of national frontiers. *National* frontiers are of secondary importance in considering the central problem of organising a stable economy for Europe. Neither would it form national alliances against Hitler's military aggression. National alliances make war inevitable; a *peace* front has not existed—it never exceeded an amateur's attempt to balance power; Poland, as Otto Strasser reminds us, is itself an aggressor (Teschen, 1938).

Thirdly, rather than see war brought upon a people, this attitude would prefer to see it faced with a period of internal struggle. Let the Nazis end the separate national existence of Poland, and, if their oppression so much as equals that of the present Polish oligarchy, they will have included within their boundaries another vast potential of revolt. The Polish revolts against Russian oppression in the last century were contributory forces in the breakdown of Tsarism. And that potential revolt could not be seduced by Hitler's unifying genius: what Mr. Crossman has noted as Hitler's independent, extra-capitalist dynamic, his religio-racial myth, works indifferently on the Austrians, not at all on the Czechs, and would work against him among the Poles. Having bowed under Hitler's hand, the Polish people *would still be alive* to struggle internally against the bloated and therefore politically weakened Nazi state.

Fourthly, this attitude believes that the whole emphasis of policy should be on home and imperial reconstruction. We must solve the economic contradictions first in our own home. We must concentrate our endeavours upon constructing a stable socialist economy in Britain and between the colonies and the several "progressive" nations—an exemplary model of the completed European structure. By so doing we withdraw from the European contradiction one strong group of contending economic interests, and we prepare an equalitarian society in which widespread realisation of equity, progress and peace would constitute an indomitable passive resistance to interference. We must similarly guarantee the moral defence of the colonies by giving to each a sound plan and foundations, and the interest and responsibility born of independence will do the rest.

The Labour movement has got its fingers in the war machine and its voices strung up in Conservatives' politics of nations. Is it to be written that in the 1939 crisis of Conservative politics, Socialists universally were swept up in the *effects* of capitalism's crisis, and forgot that they alone could suggest a lasting remedy to the cause?

BASIL HEMBRY

70 Mount Nod Road,
Streatham, S.W.16

IDEALS IN WAR

SIR,—The efforts of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION during the past weeks and months to find out what we shall be fighting for if war comes are admirable, but Critic's contribution at the beginning of last week's London Diary is a little difficult to understand. He says that our knowledge of war has dried up on our lips "the idealistic phrases always used to justify it" which were so common in 1914. "To-day," he says, "if there is war no one will think we are fighting for gallant little Poland or for any abstract causes." And then he goes on to tell us that what we shall be fighting for is "national self-preservation and a determination that the Nazis shall not crush the life and thought and civilisation out of Europe." I find it extremely difficult to see in what way freedom of thought and civilisation are less abstract causes than the crushing of Prussian militarism or making the world safe for democracy; I would even suggest to Critic that national-self-preservation is itself an abstract cause—at any rate no less abstract than "self-determination" which I have always understood to have been one of the idealistic phrases and abstract causes for which we fought from 1914 to 1918. The fact is that since the battle of Valmy—and probably long before it—all wars have unfortunately been fought for abstract causes and with idealistic phrases on the lips of those who made them and those who fought and died in them. The next war will be no exception. The fact that the ideals and causes are doomed to perish as soon as the first gun goes off is another question.

LEONARD WOOLF

Mark's House, Rodmell, Nr. Lewes, Sussex.

PACIFISM AND POLITICS

SIR,—During these anxious hours it is desirable that the position of the pacifist should be clearly understood. I venture, therefore, to suggest the sort of line along which at least one pacifist is working in the hope that it may be of value to those harassed by the apparent necessity of choosing between the two illusory alternatives of fighting or giving way to the dictators.

I believe that pacifism in the ready-made sense of the word is not "practical politics," that is to say that it does not offer a cut-and-dried programme. On the other hand, I do not believe that it is merely an escape into deceptive idealism. I believe it is an active and positive way of life, which includes within its scope politics as well as ethics and aesthetics. It is a total creed, which has, of course, political implications that may not be shirked but that may equally well not be allowed to play a predominant role. The individual cannot exist independently of the society in which he lives, and this means that he cannot be entirely logical in his attitude towards that society if he disapproves of some of its fundamental laws. All he can do is to clarify his aims and decide on what occasions the clash between them and conventionally accepted laws will be fruitful of better things and when not. To decide this correctly is very hard, and only possible to the fully integrated personality. Attitudes taken up in individual life, if they are taken by proper individuals, must spread to groups around. That is a fact which has been and can be proved. In fact we must not shirk the individual pacifist position because it is only a bridge to the national pacifist position: it is a first step, and though intellectually we may despise this first step as being insufficiently bold, we are not emotionally ready for anything but this first step if even for that. Let us learn to walk before we attempt to run.

Pacifism is, as I have said, in one sense not "practical politics," but in the true sense it is the only practical politics in that its philosophy alone provides the atmosphere in which enthusiasm can work without suffering from the evil which must attend attachment to any "partial purpose." I believe the task lies mostly in the fields of art and education, using these two as the main roads into the lives of "our dear enemy," Fascism. Our attitude to A.R.P., National Service, international crises and all the inconveniences we label Fascism will be dictated by our basic convictions, which to signify anything of value must be supra-political. We have to realise that as soon as we don our shining armour and spur against the dragon of Fascism, we become victims of St. George's disease, namely intolerant virtue proceeding from unsatisfied desires. The following words from an article by Max Plowman sum up the issue:

> Pacifism is the assertion of the moral principle that killing is no cure for wickedness. The existence of this moral principle is unaffected by the causes of war and is a reasonable imperative to those who know that, however plausible the occasions of war and however outrageous the actions of those who precipitate it, existent evil can only be increased by the barbarity and personal injustice of war.

23 Kenneth Court, S.E.11. JAMES L. HENDERSON

THE PURGE AT THE COLONIAL OFFICE

SIR,—Mr. Bates in your issue of the 19th and Dr. Norman Leys in that of the 26th of August have both missed the point made in your article published on the 5th, which was that in the dependencies mentioned there was no unofficial representation on the *Executive* Council. The reconstitution of the Executive Council in Tanganyika Territory was there cited. To that may

be added the case of Kenya where in 1938 this Executive Council was reconstituted and the official and unofficial elements balanced at four a side, to provide, as was reported in the press, for more convenient working and *closer association of the unofficial community with the work of the Government.* EAST AFRICAN

THE RAILWAYMEN'S CASE

SIR,—In the illuminating article under the above heading which appeared in your issue of 26th August, it is mentioned in one paragraph that the railways employ 600,000 men, and in another that there are 850,000 railway stockholders. May I point out, however, that while a man can fill only one post as porter, signalman or the like, an individual can be a stockholder in each of the railway companies and be thus counted several times over, i.e., in respect of each particular stock held. Some years ago I was informed by one of the leading addressing firms which collates shareholders lists for the purpose of sending out prospectuses, that after eliminating all duplications, the number of shareholders in the British raillway companies was less than 200,000.

The County Hall, S.E.1. A. EMIL DAVIES

LADY NOVELISTS

SIR,—As this correspondence has now been enriched with some personalities and an allegation against my integrity as a critic, it seems as well for me to clear up a misunderstanding. In the review which provoked this silly season controversy I had to consider a number of books which dealt with the emotions of some young women to whom very little happened. The books had in common certain features: they were concerned with nice girls of a chintzy, antique-buying, spaniel-keeping sort, and with their milieu—a comfortable middle-class world. There undoubtedly is a comfortable middle-class in this country, and nice well-bathed girls belong to it; but business isn't what it was, morals aren't what they were, the working classes don't always go discreetly to the tradesmen's entrance, the upper classes play at dangerous games like the war of nerves, and the nicest of nice girls—even if she does nothing but stay at home to look after father—must bump into all manner of social, moral, and economic problems as she grows into a woman. In the books with which I was dealing they never did: the books might have been written by the sort of Victorian Lady who never had anything but pin-money and knew nothing of politics or of her husband's business and money affairs. As they reflected the Victorian middle-class ideal of the *lady* in this respect, the term *lady-novelist* seemed an accurate term to apply to the writers who had produced them; it was used in opposition to the word *novelist*, and it did not occur to me that anyone could imagine this word to apply only to men who write novels. If I had thought so I should have been careful to tack the label novelist on to Lady Murasaki when I went on to say, with reference to her work, that it was possible to write in an entirely feminine way without being empty-headed and trivial—that is without conforming to the middle-class ideal of the lady. I made the point in order to avoid anything like this singularly futile discussion, but apparently in vain; may I make it quite clear that for me a woman who writes is a writer, and if her principal work is writing novels then she is a novelist, unless she is genteel, refined and inescapably ladylike.

While I dislike Mr. Joad's bed-and-kitchen sentiment very much indeed, I find it possesses a period charm like the interior of the Athenæum or the Reform Club. But there is nothing very pleasant about Mrs. Mitchison's contribution: "... I am a sufficiently old hand to know that, sooner or later—probably as soon as I have a new book out—this letter will be remembered against me by those men ... who want to remove women from economic competition with themselves." May I assure Mrs. Mitchison—I think I may speak for all critics here—that her letter and the Nesta-Websterish charges it contains will be forgotten long before she has a new book published.

ANTHONY WEST

ARTIFICIAL COMEDY

SIR,—May I correct a curious slip in Mr. Desmond MacCarthy's notice this week of *The Importance of Being Earnest*? Your distinguished critic states, in connection with the effect of the Queensberry trial (mis-spelt) on the original production, that "the Haymarket Theatre, which till then had been packed night after night with delighted people, suddenly emptied. In desperation, Alexander stooped to removing Wilde's name from the placards."

The theatre was, of course, the St. James's—whose character, under the management of George Alexander (who, so far as I know, never, in his whole career, spoke a line at the Haymarket) was as different from the playhouse of the exuberant, Byzantine Beerbohm Tree, as claret is from Burgundy. As for the implications in "stooped to remove," Sir George's faithful friend and biographer, Mr. A. E. W. Mason, vouches for the wholly creditable motive which inspired this attempt to mitigate the results of public reprehension on the royalties of the author, who was never more desperately in need of funds, by grudging no concession to prolong the box-office life of the play.

GEORGE STEVENSON-REECE

MR. CROSSMAN ON COLLINGWOOD

Sir,

Marxists cry "Nazi dope is all idealism."
Crossman and Collingwood say "Sure!—but realism."
And all agree their worst foe lurks between,
Who asks them what the devil then they mean.

MINUSCULUS.

WIDE BOYS NEVER WORK

SIR,—In your issue of August 12th, Cyril Connolly in reviewing the current movies makes the following comment: "... I would like to see a film of Curtis's other novel, 'Wide Boys Don't Work,' which is much warmer."

"Wide Boys" was not one of Curtis's novels, but one of my own. The title is not "Wide Boys Don't Work," but *Wide Boys Never Work*—a quibble which would not be worth mentioning except that Mr. Connolly was your reviewer of the book when it was published, and one of its chief "praisers" at that time.

I might add, also, that his wish to see the story filmed is shortly to be gratified. The film rights were purchased some months ago, and the director is to be Alfred Hitchcock.

Frohawk Cottage, ROBERT WESTERBY
Great Hormead,
nr. Buntingford, Herts.

DOUBLE SHELL is the ONLY oil used and recommended by HUMBER, HILLMAN and SUNBEAM-TALBOT

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

But one thing can be said of busy Counsel; they are touching life at many points and in many aspects. Rich and poor, good and bad, serious and trivial—the fortunes and complications in the lives of all are liable to come their way. For all his long legal life Edward Clarke had his full share in this contact with the lives of his fellow citizens.

It is obvious that lawyers, outside the Chancery Bar, deal with those misfortunes of human beings which arise from accidents and quarrels, just as surgeons and doctors deal with those which arise from accidents and illness. Frequently the same piece of human raw material is treated first by the one and then by the other specialist in human misery. For example, the man who cuts his throat has it sewn up by a surgeon and is sent to prison by a lawyer. But such contacts do not imply any sort of spiritual understanding. All that either specialist needs is a sort of rule-of-thumb knowledge about human behaviour. There is, however, a real distinction between them. A doctor who felt sympathy in its literal meaning sufficiently to share the suffering of his patients would still endeavour to do his work: his practice would merely be limited by his strength. But the lawyer would have to throw up his job, since its essence is that it is founded on arbitrary or pragmatic conventions which are liable to lose their sanction under the stress of pain. There is no "natural justice," and any verdict, however barbarous or artificial the morality on which it is based, is as good as any other so long as each is universally accepted. A lawyer cannot be a subtle psychologist (unless he is one of the elect who specialise in company law) or know much about pain. For this reason the mind of a lawyer is rather like that of one of the creatures out of Alice: one is irresistibly reminded of such remote intelligences as those of Humpty Dumpty and the brothers Tweedle.

* * *

Sir Edward Clarke, whose *Life*, most amusingly written by Derek Walker-Smith and Edward Clarke (Thornton Butterworth, 18s.), has just been published, had not only this generic resemblance but actually looked, with his immense whiskers and somewhat wooden features, as though he had lived all his life in Looking Glass Land. He had moreover the amiable and respectable qualities of many of Alice's friends. He obeyed the laws of his being, and frequently showed that he was both honest and courageous. Edward Clarke was the son of a small shopkeeper in the City. He possessed immense powers of "getting up a subject" very quickly, mastering all the essential details which he could then reproduce with perfect clarity and, if necessary, adorned with rhetoric. This gift enabled him to pass examinations or rather to come out very near the top in them, at the time when they had just opened the way for a few young men with brains. He got into the India Office, in which he would have been secure for life. He was at that time very much in love with the girl who afterwards became his first wife. But the life of a petty Civil Servant was not good enough, and he threw up the certainty in order to read for the Bar. His instinct was sound since his histrionic talents had distinguished him at school, where he was adjudged inferior only to a former paragon called Brodribb.

Clarke's youthful vanity was rather hurt by this preference, but he became reconciled to it in later life, for by then Brodribb had acquired universal fame as Sir Henry Irving and had become a close friend of his own.

* * *

Clarke set out on his legal career with immense energy and determination, supporting himself by reporting and reviewing and never letting a chance slip of speaking in public and bringing himself to notice. Clarke's first great case was that of Harriet Staunton, a woman of rather weak intellect whose death was alleged to have been brought about by starvation by her husband and brother-in-law. Clarke was able to prove that she had died of tuberculosis and his client was acquitted. The most remarkable of his cases, his defence of Adelaide Bartlett on the charge of murdering her husband, also turned on expert medical evidence, and Clarke again saved his client by mastering the whole subject. Since Adelaide Bartlett had induced her lover to supply her with bottles of chloroform and her husband was found to have died of chloroform poisoning while she was nursing him, it was a real triumph to secure her acquittal. The glory is scarcely diminished by the great probability of her innocence. Clarke was a Conservative, a great admirer of Disraeli, and it was his misfortune that during the years when he might have made a mark in politics Mr. Gladstone was for so long in office. But for six years after Gladstone's defeat over Home Rule in 1886, Clarke was Solicitor-General. At that time the Law Officers were allowed to continue in private practice, and Clarke appeared for O'Shea in the divorce suit in which Parnell was co-respondent. The *Times*, which had published forgeries and had had to pay Parnell £5,000 damages, chose to describe the ruin of the Irish leader's career as: "a story of dull and ignoble infidelity untouched as far as can be seen by a single ray of sentiment or a single flash of passion." There is a dirty meanness and almost unparalleled caddishness about these words. Clarke was still Solicitor-General when he was briefed to appear in the most exciting scandal of the late Victorian era: the Tranby Croft Baccarat case. Sir William Gordon-Cumming had been detected cheating on two nights in succession by his host's son while the Prince of Wales was banker, and had signed a paper agreeing to forswear card-playing in future. The story leaked out and Gordon-Cumming was driven to bringing a libel action, which in spite of Clarke's efforts, he lost. Sir Edward Clarke also appeared for Oscar Wilde both in his unsuccessful libel action and, without fees, at his trial. He was more successful in defending Prince Victor of Braganza on a similar charge.

After the verdict the Recorder explained to the Court that the Prince had supposed that he was being conducted to a brothel in a manner customary on the Continent. On hearing this, the crowded court burst into loud applause, though whether this was due to relief at this testimony to the normality of Princes, or to gratification at this confirmation of their belief as to Continental habits, it would be speculative to say.

* * *

Sir Edward Clarke refused the office of Solicitor-General when it was made a condition that the law officers should abandon private practice. Sir Edward Clarke defended Dr. Jameson unsuccessfully, after the Jameson Raid. During the case he formed the opinion, from the secret documents in the case, that the British Government had been involved in the attempt. Owing to this inside knowledge, he regarded Chamberlain's policy with the greatest suspicion and stoutly opposed the South African War. As a result he was asked to resign his seat. There was little bitterness as a result of this, and Clarke's integrity was admired by most. Things were very different in 1906. Clarke was one of the two members returned for the City of London, and prevailed upon the other member to give up his seat to accommodate Mr. Balfour, who had lost his. Balfour invited Clarke to occupy a seat on the Opposition Front Bench. But Clarke was a convinced Free Trader and regarded Chamberlain's Protectionist policy as disastrous. He explained to Balfour that his views were not in accord with the new policy and offered to speak from a different part of the House. Balfour said he would prefer him to speak from the Front Bench but absented himself, during Clarke's repudiation of Protection, and treated him with coldness afterwards, and soon sacrificed him in order to keep on good terms with Chamberlain. When Clarke informed Balfour that he intended to resign his seat he received a telegram to say that Balfour was writing. He never wrote. Since Clarke's political career was finished, it was perhaps lucky for him that a financial loss brought him back to the Bar, from which he did not retire until 1914. Sir Edward Clarke was a monument of virtue, according to the standards of the age in which he lived, and as his biographers say:

Litigious Victorians saw to it that Clarke's character reaped a handsome and tangible dividend.

He earned about half a million pounds busily employed in Looking Glass Land.

DAVID GARNETT

APPEAL TO MR. PRIESTLEY

Rain Upon Godshill. By J. B. PRIESTLEY. *Heinemann.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Love for a Country. By ROM LANDAU. *Nicholson and Watson.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

"There it is, I am regarded as a popular novelist, so I can speak on behalf of the species. My work no longer merely consists of writing plays or essays or novels. Quite as much of my time is taken up with lecturing, writing appeals, attending public functions . . . writing articles. For real creative work there is far less time." So, Mr. Priestley in one of the interviews which Mr. Rom Landau includes in his *Love for a Country*.

Such a frank admission disarms in advance the critic of Mr. Priestley's latest book, *Rain Upon Godshill*, in which he continues the autobiographical musings which he began in *Midnight on the Desert*. Anyway, the young reviewer is in a difficulty with Mr. Priestley, who writes of us:

> I have two objections to them: they are too timid and respectful in personal intercourse, and much too ferocious and arrogant with me in print. All I ask for, in person or in print, is to be treated as an equal. . . . It is strange that English editors, still trying to make a success of an intelligent periodical, have never realised that those bits of desiccated superciliousness are not only the sure sign of an inferior critical mind but always alienate the public.

This does not seem to me fair. How can I treat Mr. Priestley as an equal, when he can write my head off in any of his *genres*? I enjoy his plays and novels and ever since his *English Journey* have recognised him as one of the few writers who could, if he was so inclined, really educate public opinion and revive the democratic movement in this country; and, like most Socialists, I find his recent articles in the *News Chronicle* some of the most stimulating journalism we have had for a long time. But now he has put me in a fix. I cannot treat him as an equal, because he is not one, and if I criticise him he will refer to me in his next volume of reflections as a desiccated intellectual. And yet I cannot believe he either wants or needs soft soap.

Greatly daring then, I record my opinion that *Rain Upon Godshill* is a disappointing book, but eminently readable. It is readable because anything Mr. Priestley writes is readable; it is disappointing because Mr. Priestley could have made it not only readable but worth re-reading, like his *English Journey*. When he wrote that admirable book, he was something of a portent, a popular essayist and novelist with a real sense of English values and of the writer's duty not only to London critics but to the English people. He had influence because he was able to articulate the unexpressed feelings of the provinces and to remind us that London politics and newspapers and culture are not the whole of England. Those of us who live outside London, and know the gulf between metropolitan and provincial life, were proud of him and felt that here he was our man, someone who had the technique and imagination to arouse once again that provincial independence which has always been the backbone of English democracy.

Now Mr. Priestley looks like letting us down. It is not that he has put his enthusiasm into the theatre and the popularisation of Mr. Dunne's philosophy of time; a man can do both these things and remain a sturdy provincial. It is far more that he has become too absorbed in the worries of his new status. He is not only a very busy man, as he told Mr. Landau, and repeats in his own book, but fussily busy. His old personality, which drew its strength from its provincial middle-class roots, is being swamped by a new personality, the public figure which winters in Arizona or Egypt and meditates, a little self-conscious of the Priestley pipe, in the studio of the lovely house in the Isle of Wight. And the trouble is that the impressions which the new Mr. Priestley dashes off, a journey up the Nile or to the Petrified Forest, the detailed accounts of his theatrical ventures and lecture tours, in spite of the fluid excellence of the writing, lack the pungent vitality of Mr. Priestley's early work. He is so anxious about his position as a public figure, in that closed world of public figures which we read of in the gossip columns, that at times he makes us think that London has got him as it got Mr. Arnold Bennett.

Far too much of *Rain Upon Godshill* is written by this new self-important, rather touchy, Mr. Priestley. I suspect that many of his most loyal admirers will try to overlook these passages and remember only the chapters where he forgets the box office and the unfavourable reviews and the grand hotels, and writes about England.

Whenever he does this, Mr. Priestley revives his spirits and our own. He grasps by intuition what others only come to slowly by theory and research. Looking beyond the façade of our democracy, he sees English society as a plutocracy pretending to be an aristocracy, in which the Right People always retain the control, and the proper dignity of the Crown is degraded by the pyramid of social snobbery. Defiantly proud of the middle class to which he belongs, he recognises its lamentable failure to live up to its responsibilities and exposes both its lack of local patriotism and the brittleness of its culture, now that it has lost its religious beliefs and democratic ideals. He is by nature and conviction a Radical and shrewdly analyses those weaknesses of Trade-Union mentality which make many Trade-Union leaders such narrow politicians and prevent Labour from throwing up worthy successors to the pre-war Liberal reformers. Though what he says is not new, it is said with a simplicity and directness which make his writing infinitely more valuable than that of most professional politicians. And when he laments the absence of those creative ideas, without which democracy cannot live, and upbraids us for the smug self-satisfaction of our statesmen and our national press, his complaints carry conviction because they have not the querulous tone of the professional Left-winger. He exposes our deficiencies not because he revels in exposures, but because he knows and cares about the English people.

He is equally interesting when he discusses dreams or documentary films or theories of time. In all these subjects he has that disinterested, amateur enthusiasm and that ability to expound obscure themes in plain language which are the mark of the great populariser—and teacher. I have no doubt that his struggle to remain rational, and yet escape from the fetters of nineteenth-century rationalism, has enriched his dramatic writing as much as it has liberated him from political catchwords, and though I do not myself think very highly of Dunne and Gerald Heard—his two prophets—I am sure that hard thinking about the problems they raise is good for us all, and glad that writers as famous as Priestley should use their position to encourage discussion of them. It is only when he becomes self-conscious and interested in himself that he loses our sympathy. For his strength was his robust enthusiasm and open-minded appreciation of things

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outside himself. We admired him because he did not live in Bloomsbury or Westminster or any other London circle; and I humbly suggest that, if he must live in Godshill and holiday in Arizona, must submerge himself in theatrical intrigue and lecture tours, that he should do an English Journey once a year to purge the evil humours and recall to mind the people and places where he really belongs. He must not let his successes get him down!

How well Mr. Priestley understands England can be seen by comparing *Rain Upon Godshill* with *Love of a Country*. Mr. Landau writes as a foreigner with a deep devotion to England and a noble solicitude about our failings. He is, I gather, a catholic, and is deeply desirous to aid in our spiritual regeneration. Unfortunately he has neither the humour nor the contacts to understand the spirit of the English people, although he has conscientiously interviewed nearly everyone who matters—in the eyes of the right people—and surveys our national life in all its aspects. He makes few mistakes and is painstakingly progressive, as he points out the weaknesses of our judicial code, our political leadership, our sexual ethics and so on. But he is so solemn and high-minded that he misses all the vital forces in the country. His portraits of politicans are like wax-works—they are "true to life," but they never *move*. Even Sir Stafford Cripps becomes a bore, when he talks to Rom Landau. And though Mr. Landau studies the problem of science and society, he does not meet Haldane or Hogben or Bernal or Levy; though he criticises our education, he passes over its class bias. Our diet may be bad, but it seems curiously insular to remark that our tea "is made undrinkable by the barbaric addition of milk." Mr. Landau is at his best in interviewing our standard novelists. Their views are so "sound" that they suit the pontifical uplift of his style.

Love for a Country is recommended by the Book Society and, no doubt in the hurry of his new life, Mr. Priestley has attributed to it on the dust-cover "unusual skill and sensitiveness." Mr. Priestley is here grossly unfair to his own work. I would give all Mr. Landau's book for those few chapters of *Rain Upon Godshill* in which Mr. Priestley throws aside the worries of success and writes of England.

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

NEW NOVELS

Balkan Express. By LEONARD ROSS. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.
Rogue Male. By GEOFFREY HOUSEHOLD. *Chatto.* 7s. 6d.
The Blond Spider. By VINCENT BRUN. *Cape.* 7s. 6d.
Luke. By NOEL STREATFEILD. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.
Mr. Cinderella. By REX STOUT. *Faber.* 7s. 6d.
The Elephant in White. By CARYL BRAHMS AND S. J. SIMON. *Joseph.* 7s. 6d.

After the rewriting of a *cause célèbre* the adventure story is possibly the most difficult technical exercise a writer can undertake; so many stools to fall between, such an eager and uncritical audience to lead the writer on into carelessness. If all goes well the result can be extremely satisfying; Conrad's bomber in his dirty little newspaper shop and his wife's mentally deficient brother nursing a fatal parcel live in one's mind beside the detective in *The Moonstone* and the cheated, hunted killer in Mr. Graham Greene's *Gun For Sale*. But there's so much more to it than a good fast story and an interesting central figure if the thing is not going to wither and die while the ink is still wet; a story which is in its essentials entirely improbable needs more exact detail, more meticulous observation, and more accurate pyschology than one which possesses these things as its birthright. *Balkan Express* has all the things that belong in a good adventure story, a scramble for power in a Balkan State after the assassination, the pursuit of a pretender across Europe, the defeat of a *coup d'état*, but it just won't do: "It was Sir Roland Mallodon, introducing him on a radio broadcast from London, who had called Peter Starke 'the unofficial ambassador from America, a man who knows how to turn a phrase, defy a government, or balance a tea-cup in the most elegant embassies of Europe. . . .'" The hero is a ticket with a name written on it, all the characters talk alike, and the places only differ in their names. This flatness kills the story dead all too soon. *Rogue Male* is another thriller on the chase pattern with the usual international complications; the central figure makes an unsuccessful attempt on the life of a dictator and escapes; the story deals with his escape from the country and his attempt to escape the secret police sent to hunt him in England. The writing is in the rather fruity narrative style by which one used to be able to recognise the work of Lord Tweedsmuir:

> The Pal, hailed from the bar to join us on our bench, was a bit wary of me; he was inclined to think that I was a parson from the seamen's mission masquerading as an honest worker. I calmed his suspicions with two double whiskeys and my most engaging dirty story, whereupon he declared that I was a Bit of All Right and consented to talk about his officers.

The style is marked by an extreme simplicity of language coupled with the use of the longest way round; the key words in the passage quoted above are "pal," "Parson," and "whereupon," they give the flavour—a story told by an Old Boy in a roadhouse bar. The hero's attempt on the dictator has as its motive vengeance, a very brave little woman had been put up against a wall and shot:

> She was so swift and sensitive. She could do no other than make a generous cause her own. Impulsive, spiritual, intelligent, all at such energy that she seemed to glow. A boy who saw such things told me that sometimes there was a visible halo of light about her.

The pace is hot, the ending is happy, it has had good notices elsewhere and it is recommended by the Book Society—it will be the *Clubfoot* of the war of nerves.

The Blond Spider is far from being in the tuppence coloured, penny plain category which its title suggests; the story is about a couple of Austrians living in Italy in the days just before Austria became the Ostmark. They are care-free, liberal people, the husband makes a living writing for the Viennese papers, they have a pleasant circle of friends, Italian professional people and members of the German colony. A visiting lecturer at the German School of Archaeology meets them and apparently fancies the woman, the woman is flattered, the man, being vain about his emotional hold on her, amused; he settles down to watch a flirtation believing that it must end in a manner flattering to himself. Gradually he becomes suspicious that the archaeologist is a Nazi agent; he speaks to the woman about it and she puts it down to jealousy; the flirtation becomes more amusing for her, and to annoy the man further she begins to show the agent Communist pamphlets he had written years before in Germany, to let him know that they are in correspondence with certain wanted men still inside the Reich. With the complicating of their emotional situation and the slow closing of a Gestapo net the book builds up to a frightening conclusion. The handling of speech is brilliant and the neurotic relation between the Gestapo agent and the flirtatious woman is a very fine piece of writing; there is not a false note anywhere, the book is at the top of its class.

Luke is a thriller of a different kind, a murder story where the interest is kept alive by the question "Who did it?" rather than "What happens next?" It is skilfully and intelligently written, the characterisation is good and the situations are dramatic. But reading it after the three books mentioned above fills the mind with a great sorrow, the detail of popular fiction is appalling. Luke's father screams in the agony of strychnine poisoning, the heroine of the *Blond Spider* dies screaming and mad from the tortures inflicted on her, the hero of *Rogue Male* kills for the second time as he crouches, hideously scarred from beatings, on the urine-soaked floor of a burrow, the hero of *Balkan Express* bleeds from the mouth while machine guns polish off supers in the square below his window; one seems to see here the reflection of an unhealthy brooding, an obsession with the blackening of the eyes and the mind, with death in its more violent and undignified forms. It is difficult to suppress the thought, if this is what men will choose for their entertainment, what will they not suffer in life. The sight of twenty people settled in deckchairs on a pier absorbed in their books becomes rather horrible, the still intent faces mask minds concentrated on a beating arm, a human being framed in gun sights, on death and horror and fear.

It is something of a relief to turn to light entertainment which isn't sticky with blood; even *Mr. Cinderella*, although it is intellectually arid to a truly astonishing extent—it has the air common to the scenarios of "crazy" comedy films of having been evolved in conference—has a harmless tinkling charm. But with the exception of one brilliant scene, when a man tries to place too heavy a bet on an unimportant boxing match, it belongs definitely in the time-killing category. *The Elephant is White* is another pleasantly unbrutal entertainment and not at all bad if you can still stand anything with White Russian Charm as an accessory. The humour is of a refreshing kind, wholly of a period which is rapidly acquiring a very great attraction, rather fast Edwardian with a thin layer of Continental sophistication over that old sort of English humour which found the foreign-ness of foreigners an unending source of fun.

ANTHONY WEST

THE LONGEST JOURNEY

China at War. By FREDA UTLEY. *Faber & Faber.* 12s. 6d.

China Fights for Freedom. By ANNA LOUISE STRONG. *Lindsay Drummond.* 5s.

Miss Utley took her Chinese visit seriously and courageously She was not content to stay at the Base and interview the Great with a view to copy for speeches and lectures. She did in fact have valuable conversations with the Generalissimo, with the Foreign Minister, with the now discredited Wang-Ching-wei, with those chiefly responsible for education and reconstruction in China, with Mr. Eugene Chen and with more than one high military authority. She saw a good deal of Madame Chiang-Kai-shek; and gives a sympathetic but critical account of her character and achievements, remarking that she is held back by the influence of her religious training, by her connection with the "New Life Movement—that semi-Y.M.C.A., semi-neo-Confucian movement which teaches that China's ills can be cured by example and exhortation from above." But the main interest of Miss Utley's book comes from her first-hand investigations of conditions at the Front. She gives terrible descriptions of the condition of the wounded whom she saw often left to die uncared for, and she pays the highest tributes to the efforts, still inadequate, which are being made to end this ghastly deficiency in China's organisation. She is properly excited about the new industrial co-operatives and discusses the chances of China, through the agony of war, building up a new type of democracy free from the "Mandarin mentality" which has kept it back in the past and perhaps (though she scarcely hopes for so much) free from the worst evils of Western industrialism.

Miss Utley genuinely "roughed it," doing long trips to the Front, where she was the only woman, in circumstances of real danger and hardship. She learnt much on such expeditions of what the war means to peasants and soldiers. Conversations with Chinese and foreign officers at the Front is not a bad way of approaching the realities of Chinese politics. She writes of the extraordinary calm and endurance of the Chinese: "They have, perhaps more than any other people, resolved the unresolvable discord between the purposeless world in which we live and our desire that it should be ruled according to a moral purpose."

In spite of all this excellent reporting and honest endeavour, Miss Utley's book will not be universally popular with those who are working to-day for the Chinese cause. She is not "tactful" and perhaps forgets that people who are fighting a desperate war are more than usually sensitive to the criticism of candid friends. This is a pity, because her remarks upon the need of equipping new sections of the Chinese population and her criticism of administrative methods are certainly to the point. Though she speaks with admiration of the honesty, enthusiasm and efficiency of the Chinese Communists in contrast with some other elements in Chinese political life, she allows her strong anti-Soviet feeling to obtrude too frequently. Nor has she happily solved the problem, which besets every descriptive journalist, of forgetting her personal role in the adventures she describes. It takes the skill of a Peter Fleming to be the centre of the stage without ever appearing to mention himself. But when all the blemishes are written off, Miss Utley's book stands as a valuable and quite unusually honest account of conditions in China to-day—in the long run none the less valuable because it is so critical and in parts somewhat aggravating.

Miss Utley was in China for a few exciting months. Dr. Strong, whose book is a model of conciseness and clean-cut, unpretentious journalism, is a veteran fighter for freedom, with an intimate and long experience of China. She describes herself as a "publicist," an ominous word that does less than justice to many years devoted to the cause of social progress, and a life that has been as varied and exciting as that of any woman of our time. The young bluestocking who helped to organise the first great shipping strike on the Pacific Coast, the American intellectual who "changed worlds" to become one of the foremost interpreters to her own people of the new life of the Soviet Union, is not the sort of writer one expects to call "unbiased." But her best work has always had an unusual quality of objectivity: it is convincing in the manner of a good documentary film.

An inquiring mind and a passion for social justice carried Anna Louise Strong from Seattle to Samarkand, from revolutionary Wuhan to an editorial desk in Moscow, from Spain to China. Now she has returned to China again, to renew associations with that country that began in the stormy years of the "Second Chinese Revolution." No one of the arduous journeys she has described was more tragic and significant than the long trek with Borodin across the sands of Mongolia to Ulanbator, after the defeat of 1927; none of the many books she has written is more useful and informative than this present account of China in a new and greater crisis. And none is more stimulating, for this time she found the political unity that had been lacking in 1927, and the leaders of the revolutionary movement fighting shoulder to shoulder with their old domestic enemies against a common foe.

To condense the long history of Chinese civilisation into a few striking chapters, to outline the problem of the Far East in the present century, and fill in this outline with first-hand impressions of China at war and details of personal experience of the Chinese revolution, is a task that few foreigners could have attempted. Here it is all done so easily and naturally that the book may be read through at a single sitting. There is hardly any loose writing, and hardly a generalisation (of the kind inevitable in such a summary) at which the historical expert could cavil. Much of the material is a digest of standard works; but many chapters are direct reporting of a very high order, perhaps the most valuable being those describing a visit to the headquarters of the Communist armies in the North-West. J. M.

THE HALT AND THE BLIND

The Poet and Society. By PHILIP HENDERSON. *Secker and Warburg.* 7s. 6d.

It is easy to exaggerate symptoms which appear to point to a change in the direction of general thought and feeling; the symptoms may prove to be merely a surface disturbance, a summer rash, and may disappear as quickly as they came; nevertheless, there can be little doubt that somewhere between the Munich sell-out of last September and the defeat of the Spanish Republicans early this year, a significant change began to develop in the attitude of the literary and artistic "Left." There are signs, not merely of a bitter disillusionment about the real power and meaning of

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democracy in England, but also of a revulsion from all political platforms. Many young writers and artists seem to be feeling now that they put too much trust in parties and catchwords, and that a withdrawal is necessary in self-defence, and in order to reconsider, not fundamental beliefs, but the ways and means of making those beliefs effective.

Mr. Henderson's new book shows this process at work. He is at pains to point out the danger for a creative artist in identifying himself with one particular party programme among many that may claim to be representing his ideals, and swallowing its petty prejudices and jealousies—in an age when total acquiescence is more and more expected even on the anti-Fascist side—as an essential part of its aims. He goes so far, in fact, as publicly to rebuke himself for his earlier excesses: "Those whose 'conversion' appears to be the most sudden and violent," he says, "often reveal themselves later as having the most imperfect grasp of the philosophy they profess. Nor do I except my own former writings from these strictures." These are courageous words, and the more's the pity that Mr. Henderson seems to have swung from one set of half-truths to another. The general aim of his book is to examine the relation between the poet and his fellow-men in recent times, not merely in the actual works of outstanding poets, but also in the various critical theories that have been fashionable while they were writing and which formed their intellectual atmosphere. And the conclusion to which he comes is that practically all have signally failed to establish the life-giving contact, even those who have most consciously proclaimed the need of it, and that their work is therefore little better than the limping of spiritual cripples. There is much truth to be found in his argument, in the course of which he manages to give a number of recent Left critics some nasty knocks and makes some acute observations about Gerard Manley Hopkins, T. S. Eliot, and other writers of an older generation; but the superficiality of his approach is shown when he comes to his own contemporaries, where he seems to be blind to anything but the weakest side of their work. Of Auden's first volume he says:

> The poems as a whole seem to be made up of a collection of rather vague floating ideas without apparent nucleus or direction, set down with a sort of deliberate flatness. . . .

This seems to me to be a sort of rather floating statement about one of the most impressive and influential first books of the last twenty years. *Poems* 1930 caused such a stir, partly because it contained a real criticism of society, and on new lines for modern poetry, and partly because Auden showed in it that he had an unequalled talent for technical innovation, for making new kinds of music. Mr. Henderson, however, continues:

> It is not so much that they are difficult and obscure as that there does not seem to be anything particularly significant behind the general mystification. . . . Auden is often praised for his "compression" . . . but this mannerism becomes particularly irritating when it is combined, as it is in the choruses of this play (*Paid on Both Sides*), with deliberately halting rhythms and a persistent use of bad and consonantal rhyme. . . .

There are many other remarks in the same strain, and though he finds Spender more tolerable than either Day Lewis or Auden, he cannot resist a footnote about Spender's often-quoted lines—"Born of the sun they travelled a short while towards the sun, And left the vivid air signed with their honour"—to this effect: "If, as this suggests, they travelled towards their starting-place, they did not travel at all." It is disappointing that *The Poet and Society* should be marred by such trifling, because the theme is one of immense interest to writers and all who care about literature to-day, and Mr. Henderson shows that he has the gifts to make a serious and sustained contribution to the subject, if he would only give himself the chance.

JOHN LEHMANN

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RICH AND POOR

These Poor Hands. By B. L. COOMBES. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

The Child in the Crystal. By LADY SYBIL LUBBOCK. *Cape.* 10s. 6d.

Straw into Gold. By EDMUND VALE. *Methuen.* 12s. 6d.

Not so Humdrum. By R. W. HARRIS. *Lane.* 8s. 6d.

There have been so many autobiographies and novels about the life of the coal miner and especially about the Welshman, that there seems little more to say. A book like *These Poor Hands* goes on to a shelf of crowded and angry voices, indignant and bitter as Englishmen have not been since the slave trade. That large numbers of workers are no better off than the much advertised miner is true; what has roused the sympathy of the public is that very dangerous work, subject to spectacular tragedies almost like those of war, and always deleterious to bodily health, should be rewarded by some of the worst conditions of employment known to our way of living. The low-level ethics of the supply and demand system are slow in dying; it is naturally assumed that men would not become stokers, seamen, miners unless they were desperate and the desperate seller is soon beaten down.

Of course men take a pride in their sufferings. The miner is scornful of those who work in less dangerous trades and under better conditions. But like the returned soldier and sailor the miner is shocked to discover, not that courage is its own reward (which everyone knows) but that he has been cheated. Hence the touchiness, suspicion and litigiousness of the miners whom Mr. Coombes portrays; and the disillusion. Mr. Coombes is still a miner and he has been at it all his life. This gives a perspective to his book, a measure of philosophy, and it is remarkably little marred by that political sourness which makes a man forget his feeling for his work in itself. Brought up on a Shropshire small holding where, though the land was failing, his family considered themselves better off than a good many of their neighbours, he took an obviously superior energy when he went to work in the Welsh mines; and it is obvious from the impressive composition of his book, that he must stand out among his fellow workers.

There is room for *These Poor Hands* in the crowded shelf, and in fact it displaces a great many of its predecessors; chiefly because Mr. Coombes is concerned with the craft of mining and not excessively with his own emotions. He worked mostly in the levels where the miner, after a three mile walk up the mountains, walks on then into the mine instead of descending in a cage. The danger of gas was less. The men worked, in his early days before

the war, by candlelight. Their worst enemies were the feebleness of the air in some of the pits and the incalculable falls of stone which were constantly maiming the men. Later he was on one of the cutting machines which chewed its way yards at a time where before men had had to lie with their picks and often soaked with water.

This is an unusual book because although Mr. Coombes has hated the slavery, the trickery and the horrible toll of the mines and, like the majority of his generation, is determined that his own children shall not go into an industry which has swindled so many generations, he has not lost his feeling for the human side of it and for the comedies of work as well as its tragedies. This is an honest, humane document, absorbing in its simplicity and dignity. For all its fatalism and disillusion, it never loses its freshness, and the serenity of the craftsman. There is an extraordinary passage describing how he fell into some old workings, untouched for a couple of generations, and how the men admired the trimness and beauty of the cutting down in that time. Speeding up had destroyed that old thoroughness. But in that working they discovered not only an earlier generation's pride but the skeletons of six or seven children !

It is extraordinary to move on to Lady Sybil Lubbock's graceful account of her childhood and girlhood in the last twenty years of the nineteenth century :

> The contrasts between rich and poor in the industrial North seemed too sharp to be at all agreeable to contemplate. At dinner, for instance, at Wentworth, while we ate our long and succulent meal in the great tapestried dining hall, a choir of miners sang to us divinely from the gallery. What did they think, I wondered, of the gowns and jewels, the silver and gold plate they saw below them, not to mention the wine and the food ?

The child expressed her doubts to Aunt Harriet who had none : " Nonsense my child, they like it ; it's what they're used to ; don't talk like a Socialist."

The Child in the Crystal is perhaps a slightly fond book, but it is a delightful chronicle of family life and a valuable factual record of the method of bringing up girls of the upper classes at the time. (There is a hint of apology in the use of the phrase " upper classes " and that embarrassment is the crack that shows in a composure hitherto preserved whole. The elders would not have apologised.) What strikes one at once is the incredible protection of the children, and the not unwise and studied selection of pleasures and disciplines. The upper class child was then and to a considerable degree still is, a severely pruned and trained plant. There were periods of running wild, but there was a return to the starched frock. Order, not freedom, was the ideal, and the decorum enforced, quite acceptably, on the children was a miniature of the obedience to convention which was demanded of their elders. Learning the immense list of Lubbock relations was part of the training. It must have been like learning the Book of Kings. The educational programme was terrific but it was largely literary. Between eleven and thirteen the girls were reading Grimm and the romantic German novels in German. Molière, Corneille, Victor Hugo, Voltaire's *Charles XII* and Lamartine's *Lives* and carefully chosen pieces of Rousseau's *Confessions* in French ; in English, Carlyle, Motley and Macaulay and Outlines of Ancient History. There was no science nor mathematics. It sounds stiff for a child, but of course a good deal of it went like water off a duck's back ; and it was entirely congenial to the writer, who was of a shy, imaginative, literary, turn of mind.

Not So Humdrum is amusingly anecdotal about a life in the Civil Service and Mr. Edmund Vale's *Straw Into Gold* describes how " you cannot go to the romantic world via Commerce, but you can go to commerce via it." Mr. Vale has invented games, written a book called *Pixie Pool* and has done walking tour articles and publicity for the railway companies. He has a real feeling for Wales, where he lives. But on the personal side he is one of those tiring egoists who, though they never stop talking about themselves, actually reveal very little. His love affairs are embarrassing :

> The side of her that posed as an intellectual fledgling misunderstood by her earthbound compeers seemed to claim protection rather than to strike an harmonic chord with my own feelings on that plane.

An attempt to revive the fishing industry in Anglesea, furniture making, travel and writing it up afterwards—this is his material. The book has the interest of a comedy of unconscious self-revelation and explains a good deal about that peculiar modern phenomenon—the semi-artistic temperament.

V. S. PRITCHETT

SHEEP IN SPRING

Uncle Fred in the Springtime. By P. G. WODEHOUSE. *Herbert Jenkins.* 7s. 6d.

This is P. G. Wodehouse's thirty-fifth, unless there are any suppressed indiscretions, and the dose you will be glad to hear is as before, unchanged and undiluted. But having rung thirty-four changes on half-a-dozen characters, Mr. Wodehouse is faced with a new problem ; " I know what they say, and how they say it, but what are they going to say it (Hullo-ullo-ullo-ullo-ullo) about ? " The Empress has dozed through a number of crises, Lord Emsworth dithered through them, while the Duke of Dunstable has created them ; so that new ones are hard to come by, and if you are to find a situation that embroils them all in series of impossible misunderstandings, you will realise that it has to be pretty complicated.

The glory of the Wodehouse novels is their simplicity, the fact that they are so easy on the eye, but this one deviates from tradition in this respect. You are constantly worried as to who is whose uncle, niece, or fiancé(e), and who is impersonating whom. To true fans, who know what the Drones are going to say before Mr. Wodehouse himself, this will not matter, but it is confusing none the less. However, Mr. Wodehouse is artful in distinguishing between types which to many eyes would seem exactly the same. He is like a shepherd who knows each sheep by name and foible, and is able to pass on the priceless knowledge of their spring gambollings. The other Wodehouse touch is his perfection of timing and his slangy elegance, and these are, of course, as gentlemanly as ever.

This book could not have appeared at a more propitious time. Outside events need to be exchanged for events at Blandings Castle, where Dunstable has decided that Emsworth is potty, and that his pig must go. Lord Emsworth, not unnaturally, is appalled, and calls in Lord Ickenham (Uncle Fred) to help him ; this irresponsible nobleman comes to Blandings Castle disguised as a brain specialist, called in by Dunstable to see Emsworth, and by Emsworth to see Dunstable. With him he brings his nephew Pongo Twistleton, a prominent Drone not at all disguised as his

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THE BODLEY HEAD

secretary, who now, after several sad experiences, dreads his uncle's every move; for over them looms the formidable figure of Jane, Lady Ickenham, whom Mr. Wodehouse has safely tucked away in the South of France, to allow Uncle Fred a run for his money. A very fine scamper it is too, especially when Pongo and the Duke's secretary, Baxter, compare notes. Add to this Lady Constance Keeble (dragon), Claude "Mustard" Pott (detective), Polly Pott (his daughter) in love with Ricky Gilpin (muscular poet); stir well; dispose between red covers; sell at seven and sixpence; swallow at one gulp, and you will find it slips down like winking.

RAYMOND ALDERSON

BOOKS ABOUT BALLET

Massine. By GORDON ANTHONY. *Routledge.* 25s.

Ballet Russe: Memoirs of Nicholas Legat. *Methuen.* 25s.

Here are two more sumptuous books for ballet fans, whose pockets (if publishers know their business) must be almost as inexhaustible as their enthusiasm. Of the two, Gordon Anthony's is by far the better value for money, and his thirty-five full page studies will be of permanent interest as a record of the greatest figure in contemporary ballet. Mr. Anthony is the most satisfactory photographer of the ballet: he avoids the dullness of an obvious studio pose without falling into the opposite error of sensationalism. In the present collection he has concentrated on portraying Massine's talent for characterisation, and he succeeds in showing how astonishingly varied Massine can be both in conception and in interpretation. There is one artistic lapse—a regrettable composite photograph of *Symphonie Fantastique*—but the remaining studies are excellent, particularly those of *Tricorne*, *Petrouchka* and *Le Beau Danube*. Armed with this book, admirers of Massine will have tangible proof to back them up when, inevitably, they tell ballet fanciers of the next generation that the ballet is not what it was in their day. Mr. Sacheverell Sitwell has contributed a long, disjointed, badly written and over-idolatrous appreciation of Massine.

Ballet Russe is a very slim book, consisting of no more than fifty odd pages of text, a dozen or so rather dim photographs, and a selection of the author's caricatures of bygone personalities of the ballet, some of them reproduced in vivid colours. At the price of twenty-five shillings I can recommend only the most determined collectors of ballet books to add it to their libraries, which is a pity, because it would do no harm to some of the more vociferous and indiscriminate applauders of the recent season at Covent Garden to learn a little about the artistic standards which prevailed in the palmy days of patronage, and which existed largely because the audience was discerning enough to reject the second-rate.

Legat had the remarkable distinction of being first soloist, ballet master, and professor of the highest class of the ballet school, at St. Petersburg at the beginning of the century. There, and subsequently in London, where he died recently, he had a hand in the training of almost all the famous dancers of to-day. His short memoirs contain very little of significance that has not been recorded before, but it comes from a new angle, and his account of the fusing of the Russian, French, Italian and Scandinavian traditions, which made possible the development of contemporary Russian Ballet, have an added interest in being given from the point of view of the teacher who was the first to acquire and pass on to others the technique with which the Italians astonished St. Petersburg in the 'eighties.

GEOFFREY PARSONS

THE PAPACY

A History of the Popes. By JOSEPH MCCABE. *Watts.* 15s.

It is right and just to give the fullest recognition to the genuine piety and admirable work of many Catholics; but this is no reason why we should accept the Papal claims or admit the truth of the "history" which is manipulated in order to bolster them up. Too many Protestants, in their desire to be fair, have yielded far more than they ought to have done; and it is as well that a halt should be called to this dangerous tendency. Mr. McCabe's book, though perhaps at times too violent in its indignation, is timely and ought to prove useful.

He confines himself to the history of the Popes. It may be remembered that Newman, contemplating the temptations to worldliness which assailed the successors of St. Peter, stood amazed at their moderation, and said they must have enjoyed a special measure of divine grace to have been able to resist these impulses so successfully. One's thoughts inevitably turn to Gregory IX or Julius II; those who wish further examples will find them by the dozen in Mr. McCabe's book.

Nothing is easier than to explain how, by a perfectly natural growth, one of the company of presbyters gradually became a monarchical "Bishop," or how one of these Bishops gradually attained a supremacy over his equals. But the process was in both cases resisted. The "Shepherd" of Hermas knows of no monarchical Bishop; and even Lietzmann, whose inclination is to grant as much as possible to the Catholics, declares that there was no genuine Pope of Rome before Anicetus, about 150. As for any recognition of Papal supremacy in the first five centuries, the counter-evidence is overwhelming. The Romanists often claim Cyprian as a witness; but they do not quote his letter to Pope Cornelius, whose "exaltatio et inflatio et arrogans et superba jactatio" springs not from imitation of Jesus, who taught humility, but is born of the spirit of Antichrist: while Tertullian, Irenaeus, and Firmilian used language about Papal pretensions fully as vigorous as that of Luther himself. What Hippolytus, a saint of the calendar, said of Callistus, another saint, is too well known to need repetition.

On some points Mr. McCabe need not have insisted. The Popes of the Dark Ages have no apologist: in the words of Baronius they were "monstruosi, vita turpissimi, usquequaque foedissimi"; indeed, when one of them was a boy of twelve, the only wonder is that his precocity in vice was so miraculous. The other Bishops were no better; Peter Damiani calls them heretical brigands, whose conversion was a harder task than that of a Jew.

One's chief objection to the book is that it is so uniformly gloomy. A touch of Gibbonian irony, or an occasional mimicry of Creighton's almost excessive charity, would have perhaps made it more pleasant to read, while increasing its effectiveness. There are astonishingly few errors. I may mention one. Mr. McCabe, speaking of "Thou art Petros, and on this Petra I will build my church," says the pun is unworthy of Jesus. As a matter of fact, Jesus was an Oriental, to whom punning came naturally; and many of his sayings, when translated into Aramaic, resemble the paronomasias which Milton puts into the mouth of Belial. John the Baptist, also, punned at least once: "God is able of these stones (abānim) to raise up sons (bānim) unto Abraham."

E. E. KELLETT

THE AMERICAN WAY

Knowledge for What? The Place of Social Science in American Culture. By ROBERT S. LYND. *Oxford University Press.* 11s. 6d.

The substance of this challenging book was delivered as four lectures by Professor Lynd at Princeton University in the spring of 1938. Its purpose is to "break through the network of diffidence and respect for one's colleagues that tends to shackle frankness within an academic fraternity," and to destroy the deadening belief that "more knowledge about anything is a self-justifying pursuit." The trouble with the social sciences, Dr. Lynd finds, is that for the most part they live and die in the university lecture halls. Whole courses leading to advanced degrees are "passed" and dissertations are written with no regard to the ultimate purpose of all this knowledge—other than to give more lectures and to supervise the writing of more dissertations. His book is a vigorous plea for the establishment and recognition of sociology as an applied science, on the ground (presented here with the objective certainty of a scientific formula) that it is the sole hope of liberty and freedom in a changing world. The lofty disclaimer of the faculty groups that "It is not the duty of the universities to reform the world" offers a blank cheque to the apostles of Fascism, which Dr. Lynd regards as a social leprosy.

Since the world war the Western cultures have crossed a momentous mountain range; they can never go back to the *status quo ante* of liberal casualness. When the author speaks of culture he does not mean culture "in the refined sense of *belles lettres* and sophisticated learning;" he speaks as an anthropologist would of the rhythm of human behaviour; everywhere, he says, men are engaged in getting a living, in living with the other sex and rearing young, in making group decisions and maintaining sanctions and taboos, in performing some sort of religious practices, and in carrying on patterned forms of leisure. Meanwhile the key to man's deliverance from the consequences of his own

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laisser faire is locked up in the universities, one may assume, while through the open windows the dons hear, with mild interest, the cries of a drowning civilisation. Count Czernin has just written that "European culture is crumbling under the influence of the machine age to which Europeans, unlike the Americans, cannot adapt themselves." Dr. Lynd thinks that in America, where the N.R.A. Codes are struggling to slow down the introduction of machinery, men work nevertheless in a world of specialisation and division of labour, whether as scientists or as business men, so that the sense of futility that haunts their private worlds is enhanced by the coercion of forces they can never see. He has no faith in education as a panacea. He reports the theory that the need is to "intensify education, so that as education makes people better informed many of the problems that now beset us will disappear;" and he discards it on the ground that it operates, in effect, to justify everyone in continuing to do what he is now doing while we pass the buck to education. He sees the whole social scene, with its gradual slump in human values, as a vast network of authorities passing the buck; and writes with a cold ferocity of the habit of reliance on casual adjustment, assumed to occur automatically wherever it is rationally relevant, of dependence upon commercial exploitation to diffuse new knowledge, and of the freedom granted to interested power-blocs to suppress patents, obstruct change, and bend new knowledge to their private ends. He sees that Americans are accumulating disabilities faster than they can achieve social legislation, which, as Professor Laski has said (*Democracy in Crisis*, 1933), has been made difficult to enact by "a constitution so organised as to minimise the power of popular will and to confront it with a body of safeguards for the rights of private property."

From a complicated picture of citizenship in decline, social reform versus the complete loneliness (not to say selfishness) of individual existence, the fallibility of privately owned news-sources, the dependence of men's beliefs on their emotional needs, and professors of economics not teaching Marx because they "cannot afford to commit hari-kari," there emerges a cautious approach towards approval of some form of authoritarianism. "The tactics of a Hitler," says Dr. Lynd, "are profoundly right in so far as they recognise and seek to serve the need of human beings for the constant dramatisation of the feeling of common purpose." The religious complex in man may need regimentation. But though the critical and destructive faculty of reason (which flourishes a little outside the universities) will continue to unite that minority of men who have always been proved right, their rightness has always had to be raked from the ashes of the things they sought to preserve, and their unity is being weakened as never before by their purely contemplative attitude. At present the authority to adjust our social arrangements is not in the hands of those with the knowledge to do it; while those who have the authority (whether representatives elected by the people or dictators who act with their assent) must accommodate their measures to a mass intelligence that functions at the level of primitive fears and taboos.

This book needs patient reading, for it is written in "American"—the tortuous language of American scholarship which has evolved hideous words like conceptualisation, acculturated, individuation, specificities, and exploitativeness. But it is an excellent book, which calls to social scientists to be up and doing before it is too late. The call may be heard in America, where despite the fierce individualism of the people the social sciences are organised and aggressive. Who will hear it in the din of Europe, where its urgency has the quality of despair? C. H. ROLPH

The Building of a Nation's Health. By SIR GEORGE NEWMAN. *Macmillan.* 21s.

Sir George Newman set out to make a series of selections from his Official Reports as Chief Medical Officer to the Ministry of Health and the Board of Education; but he came to the conclusion it would be "better and more timely" to prepare a summary record of "'how statecraft and medical knowledge took counsel together' at the opening of a new epoch of preventive medicine." The result is an oddly discursive volume, in the course of which the reader travels from Herodotus and Hippocrates to Sir Robert Morant and the author himself, along a series of roughly parallel paths, walking sometimes very fast and sometimes slowly, and wondering half the time why the road pursues this particular course rather than another. The book opens with a brief and interesting account of the earlier public health movements inspired by Chadwick, Fair, Southwood Smith, and the Benthamites in general. It then proceeds to two very professionally minded chapters dealing with "the Governance of English Medicine," and the development of medical education. Sir George Newman has an almost unqualified admiration for the General Medical Council and its doings, and is very much better satisfied with the existing conditions of medical education than the more intelligent of those who have to undergo it. Chapter IV takes the reader back to the realm of Public Health, by describing the creation of the Ministry of Health on the basis of the old Local Government Board. Elsewhere, the author is very strong in his criticism of the mistake made when the L.G.B. were allowed to come into being as little more than the old Poor Law Board writ large. He does not appear to realise that much the same thing was allowed to happen when the L.G.B. became the M. of H. Chapter V brings the reader to an account of the evolution of Local Government in its public health aspects, mainly from the time of the Royal Sanitary Commission of 1869. Much of this is interesting; but it is curiously capricious in what it puts in and leaves out. Housing, for example, is very scantily treated, despite its fundamental importance. Later chapters describe the School Medical Service, the growth of "Special" Schools for defective children, the approach to State-aided physical education, the growth of maternity and infant-welfare services, the problems of industrial welfare, and the institution of health insurance and State-supported medical research; and in the midst of these is a very sketchy chapter on "The Nutrition of the People." In the book as a whole there is much that is both valuable and interesting; but the defects of arrangement, the uncertainty of scope and manner of treatment, and—not least—a certain complacency on the part of the writer, make it a dissatisfying sequel to *English Sanitary Institution*, a famous book, with which it inevitably challenges comparison.

Baseless Biography. By E. C. BENTLEY. Drawings by NICOLAS BENTLEY. *Constable.* 5s.

Suitable as a nightcap for the worried, a merry welcome to the guest-room, or a perpetual family stand-by, this book of rhymed and illustrated biographies by E. C. Bentley is a most excellent piece of wit. There are fifty biographies in all, each made more succulent by the brilliant line drawings of son Nicolas Bentley. We find John Knox denouncing frocks, Archbishop Laud reading the poem *Maud* and Machiavelli very fond of jelly. We also find Göring well content over the smallness of Hitler's moustache. Dorothy Sayers appears in the biographies as well as Attila and Chaucer—the last mentioned looking exactly like a sun-cure picture of Bernard Shaw. These "biographies," or more correctly "Clerihews," have been written by Bentley over a period of thirty years; they produce personalities to please any generation or taste. This is a small book to buy and keep always on your most accessible shelf; and don't forget to find a last laugh at the index at the end.

BOOKS TO COME

The crisis makes it difficult to name specific dates for the publication of forthcoming books. Publishers, like other people, differ in their estimates of the nature of war-time conditions in London. In general, however, most of the big houses are continuing in the ordinary way with preparations for their autumn programmes.

Mr. Rupert Hart Davies, one of the directors of Jonathan Cape, tells me that his firm has made no preparation for evacuation and will continue to publish in London, conditions permitting. The heavier books listed, such as historical monographs, which would presumably be unsaleable in a time of crisis, will be held up, but other books will be issued as planned. On September 8th, Cape hopes to publish *The Loneliest Mountain*, a volume of poems by W. H. Davies which the poet announces as his last. "Whatever happens," he says in a prefatory note, "the present book ends my career as a living author." This remark, incidentally, has no relation to current events but is caused by Mr. Davies' ill-health and also perhaps by the disillusionment expressed in one of his poems:

> Since music's now a manufactured thing,
> Potted and churned in every house we pass—
> Think of the birds, how they more wisely sing.

The firm of Dent also hopes to carry on as usual, although if raiding is severe, they will publish from Letchworth where their printing plant is established. Mr. John Hadfield expressed the extremely sane view that the maintenance of a civilised life, and consequently the publication of books, was an absolute necessity in war-time. People, he thinks, will read more rather than less. Incidentally he pointed out that a successful publishing firm, continuously engaged in business and therefore without large reserves in the bank, would be naturally inclined to speed up rather than to reduce output in a time of crisis, since it would require cash to pay its employees and maintain its resources. The rising cost of paper would of course be a difficulty, but books would be printed somehow on inferior paper if necessary. Dent hopes to publish on September 7th *Calling for a Spade*, by Richard Church, a volume of country essays some of which made their first appearance in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION. Mr. Hadfield has himself edited *The Christmas Companion*, an anthology of essays, stories, poems, puzzles and games which will be published shortly.

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Mr. Stanley Unwin has always been noted for his philosophic calm. It was on August 4th, 1914, that he registered the new company incorporating his name in spite of many prophecies of disaster. Unhampered, however, as established publishers were, by a list of books unsuitable to a war mentality, he was remarkably successful. Incidentally, on the first page of the firm's first list was the announcement of a book on the *Invasion of France* 1814, which was published when France was again undergoing that experience.

Mr. Stanley Unwin is now on holiday in the farthest confines of Switzerland. It is his policy not to allow his plans either for work or holidays to be interfered with in any way by the machinations of foreign Powers. Consequently Mr. Philip Unwin expects that business will continue as long as possible in Museum Street and has taken steps to strengthen the basement. He expressed the opinion that there will be a demand for topical works, technical handbooks—his firm has some observers' Handbooks for the Civil Air Guard in preparation—and for light fiction. Mr. Unwin recalled the tremendous success of Miss Ethel Dell (whose publisher was Mr. Fisher Unwin) during the late war. It will be interesting to see what kind of light fiction catches the public taste this time.

Messrs. Harrap will continue business at their present quarters, conditions permitting, and expect to publish on September 15th, *Science Marches On*, an analysis of science itself, particular discoveries being cited rather as illustrations than for their own sakes. It is by Walter Shepherd, F.G.S., Lecturer in Physical Geography at the Working Men's College, London. The final chapter, "Where is Science Going?" propounds some topical questions.

Not acting, one hopes, on inside information, Mr. Gollancz has already evacuated his staff and records. Mr. Norman Collins, who was supervising the final arrangements, stated that the firm will await developments. In the ordinary way, they would be publishing a further batch of books in the third week of September.

Messrs. Heinemann state that they are going straight ahead with their publishing programme. They will publish *The Grapes of Wrath*, as announced, on September 7th and hope to publish on September 11th a new novel by Mr. Graham Greene, *The Confidential Agent*. The agent comes from a country torn by civil war. His party is urgently in need of coal which lies unworked in the collieries of a magnate whose only interest is in his pocket. Mr. Greene, as perhaps the most violently readable writer now in action, ought to be a best-seller.

Collins, also remaining where they are according to latest news and proceeding with their plans, hope to publish Paderewski's Memoirs on September 11th. Paderewski, who is now in his seventy-ninth year, deals here with the story of his early days in a small Polish village far from civilisation and his life up to the beginning of the Great War. He leaves his career as Prime Minister of Poland and his subsequent return to music to a later volume. According to Mr. Bernard Shaw, this work has every quality of a great autobiography. We are told that there is no attempt to build up a glamorous legend. It is a deeply sincere record of an extraordinary life to which current events lend an additional and tragic interest.

Gay story. One of the publishing firms which supplies its staff with a basement for air-raids pasted up on the walls during the last crisis a notice to those making use of the domestic arrangements: "Employees are asked to be frank in as dignified a way as possible."

MARIE SCOTT-JAMES

Week-end Competitions

No. 496

Set by F. Laws

The philosophies of Berkeley, Coué, and Mendel have been outlined in limericks. The usual Prizes of Two Guineas and Half a Guinea are offered for the most memorable limericks expounding the Contribution to Thought of *two* of the following:—Darwin, Lamarck, Dr. Buchman, Father Divine, Sir James Jeans, J. B. Priestley, Karl Marx, Freud, Adler, Mary Baker Eddy, D. H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, Sir James Frazer, James Joyce or Godfrey Winn.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, Sept. 8th.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 494

Set by H. B. Mallalieu

The usual prizes are offered for a 24-line poem on "Adam's" reflections on a Blackpool crowd.

Report by H. B. Mallalieu

If Adam thinks only half these things about a Blackpool crowd, I, for one, shall not dare to look him in the face. Most competitors treated their subject with an unexpected gravity. To say the least of it, Adam is disgusted with his descendants after six thousand years. "Leave me to my silence," he pleads: and again, "It would be good now to be alone." But it is not so much the limelight he minds, like Garbo; it is the modern Eve who comes in for most censure. C. W. F. looked upon Adam as the first Socialist and makes him comment:

The ages bring new knowledge, power,
But Man no nearer Heaven on Earth.

Adam has, apparently, a particular detestation of women's hats, men's ignorance, of being stabbed in the knees, and of the physical weakness of his modern descendants. "Beda" voices his desire to fall on top of the Blackpool crowd and crush them beneath his weight. I've often wondered whether the same thought occurs to elephants at the Zoo.

A few competitors tried to write verse that would match the ruggedness of Adam. Several wrote parodies of Milton and H. P. B. sent in an amusing parody of Stanley Holloway, with the line:

At per twelvepence, per person, per peek.

There were plenty of good entries, but taken all round Allan M. Laing seems to be most successful: and T. Wilson, because he puts the opposite point of view better than the few competitors who agreed with him, is recommended for second prize.

FIRST PRIZE

God let me, Adam, when he floated Man,
In on the ground floor of the Human Plan;
But shares have slumped; and I, in alabaster,
Stare helpless at the proofs of our disaster:
Bay-windowed men whose faces shine with food
Enjoying an excursion in the nude,
With restless women, titillated, milling
Around me, doubtful if I'm worth their shilling.
Old Adam plain I see in the hot gaze
Of men still living in primeval days;
Eve, as I knew her, in the sidelong glance
Of women eager for the serpent's dance.
I hear their chatter as they pass me by:
The silly-clever and the sensual-sly;
The earnest student babbling from his book;
The parson, black-clothed, cawing, like a rook;
And never, in that multi-varied voice,
Is one that bids my heart rejoice;
Not one that nourishes a hope in me
Of that superior race that was to be . . .

O, Jacob Epstein, God, or Whom-you-will,
Put once again this people through your mill;
But till they bear some tool-marks of the master
Let me not live, even in alabaster.

ALLAN M. LAING

SECOND PRIZE

ADAM SPEAKS

Oh let me speak! Who set me here?
May I not join the crowds around me,
Speak with a sharp and reedy voice,
Mix with the folk that so astound me?

My heavy form, my uncouth limbs,
Are but a jest for those who view me;
I would be fine and smooth as they,
Not as I was when Eve first knew me.

Come trim my nails and cut my hair,
Let me the first of men be leader;
No more a shapeless bulk in stone;
A polished person, poet, pleader.

Give me some garments spruce and new.
With fig leaves I'll no longer gird me.
These Blackpool beauties please me so,
I'll gladly with these gazers herd me.

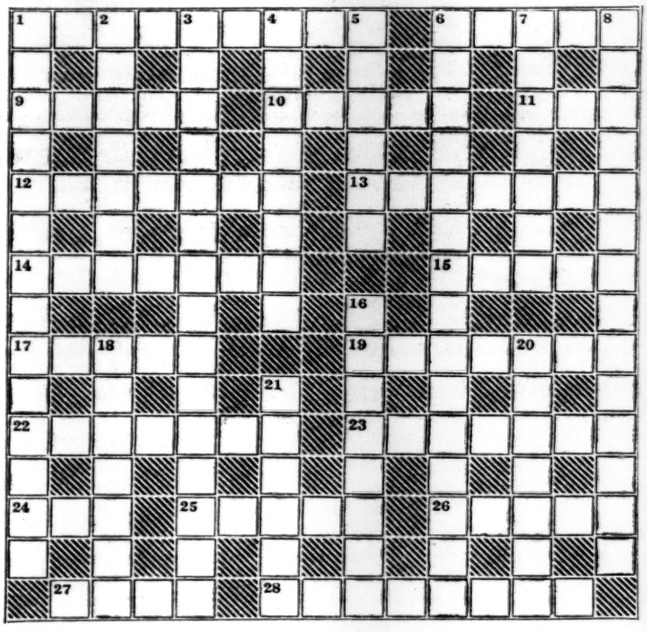
The modern type, the finished work,
The elegant, not elemental,
No more paleolithic, but
Decorous, decadent, Oriental.

Alas! no friendly voice I hear;
No kindly hand moves to transform me.
Alone, pre-human, unconceived,
To my stone coffin I conform me.

T. WILSON

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 495

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

L. W. Kirby, Oak Cottage, Bunch Lane, Haslemere, Surrey

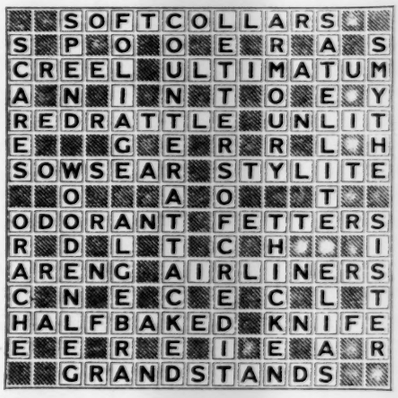
ACROSS

1. Make an enlargement of some subject. (9)
6. Bit of floral composition. (5)
9. Two are the criterion of Don't Care. (5)
10. Monkey in a back street. (5)
11. Sir Kingsley Wood's concern. (3)
12. A bullet for the Listener. (7)
13. Steady blast — past. (7)
14 (rev.). Should not be used for removing motes out of eyes. (7)
15. He, I see, made an ill-fated ship. (5)
17. Lend me a ten-bob note to buy a piece. (5)
19. He'd fuel cut up. (7)
22. Operatic hero of half an island. (7)
23. So crude-ly cleansed. (7)
24. He takes her for preference. (3)
25. Part of the oratorio Jack likes best. (5)
26. Monosyllabic plainsong notes. (5)
27. This may show the Grand Trunk. (4)
28. And this may be the Grand Trunk line. (8)

DOWN

1. Correspondence for Lord Beaverbrook's paper? (14)
2. "Can I do you for anything?" was his Rabelaisian attitude. (7)
3. Dance of the Village Smith. (15)
4. "Take an — not too stately." (8)
5. The I.R.A. is the most recent one to Eire. (6)
6. Does this game involve "caterwalling"? (15)
7. Portia's word for the common ferry. (7)
8. Flora's nobility. (14)
16. They're off at it. (8)
18. A windy fellow? (7)
20. Political explorers search for it as a rule. (7)
21. Capital for wool. (6)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



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CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS
Rates and all information on page 355

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

CRISIS DIARY—BRITAIN'S FOREIGN ASSETS—BANK RATE POLICY.

EVENTS have moved with such rapidity during the past week in the financial world that it may be useful briefly to recapitulate their sequence before commenting on their significance. Here then, in diary form, is the story :—

August 24. Bank rate raised from 2 to 4 per cent. Clearing banks announce deposit rates increased from ½ to 2 per cent., call money 3 per cent. Discount rate, three months' Treasury bills, 3⅜–⅞ per cent. Minimum prices fixed for gilt-edged securities—War Loan 88½. Little business in equities; *Financial News* index 74.1. Commodities : wheat and cotton rise, metals fractionally lower. Wall Street quiet; Dow Jones index 131.3.

August 25. Sterling unpegged, closes at $4.48. Gold 154*s.* per oz. Chinese and Japanese bonds rise. Kaffirs and internationals advance; also slight recovery in British industrials; *F.N.* index 74.8. Commodities rise generally; copper £45 7/16. Wall Street rallies; Dow Jones 133.7, after 130.9.

August 26. Sterling closes $4.40, belgas, guilders and Swiss francs moving with dollar, other currencies following sterling. Gold 155*s.* Credit stringency in money market through banks calling in short loans; call money 3–3½ per cent. Wall Street strong; Dow Jones 136.4.

August 27 (*Sunday*). Treasury Order issued prohibiting Stock Exchange dealings in securities of Argentina, Belgium, Canada, France, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the U.S.A. British holders of such securities must report their holdings to Bank of England within 30 days. Bankers clearing house moves to Stoke.

August 28. Sterling closes $4.28, after $4.10. Sweden severs link with pound; krona closes 17.90. Gold 161*s.* Credit stringency continues. Stock market : industrials quietly firm; *F.N.* index 75.3. Kaffirs strong. Commodities advance further; copper £46 3/16. Decentralisation of banks' and other financial institutions' headquarters to country premises proceeds. Dutch bank rate raised from 2 to 3 per cent. Wall Street irregular, Dow Jones 134.7.

August 29. More confident tone. Sterling closes at $4.38; gold 157*s.* Stock market firm : War Loan 89, *F.N.* index 77.5. Sharp reaction commodities; copper £45 11/16. Wall Street strong. Dow Jones 137.4.

August 30. Rally continues. Sterling $4.39½, gold 158*s.* 6*d.* Considerable buying of gilt-edged and leading industrial equities. War Loan 90¾, *F.N.* index 78.8. Commodities irregular; copper £45½. Wall Street hesitant, Dow Jones 136.2. South African Govt. announces decision to appropriate all proceeds from sale of gold above 150*s.*

August 31. (*Forenoon*) General stock market reaction. War Loan 90, leading industrials 6*d.* to 2*s.* down in first hour's trading.

The record indicates that between Monday and Wednesday evening City insiders grew increasingly confident of some sort of settlement. On Thursday, expectations were less sanguine.

* * *

The attitude of the investing public to the crisis has been stoical—an admirable display of phlegm. As for the steps taken by the authorities, the only action open to criticism is the decision to raise the Bank rate. The policy of allowing the pound temporarily to find its own equilibrium is undoubtedly preferable to losing gold in "pegging" the rate; and it is to be presumed that, if war comes, exchange control will be imposed to support a new rate "pegged" at a level agreed upon in consultation with the U.S. Government. The Order calling for the registration of foreign securities had been expected in the City, and is to be regarded as the first step towards mobilising these assets for war requirements. How much can be mobilised? Excluding "direct" investments in property and undertakings, and omitting foreign railway stocks, the *Economist* recently published the following estimate of current British investments abroad :—

ESTIMATE OF BRITISH HOLDINGS OF OVERSEAS SECURITIES
(In £ millions)

	U.S.A.	For.	U.S.A. and For.	Dom.	Total
Investment trusts	50	47½	—	30	127½
Insurance offices	—	—	89	116¾	205¾
Private $ security holdings ..	125	—	—	—	125
Mining	—	—	—	714*	714
Total	—	—	—	—	1172¼

* Mainly Dominion or Colonial.

Allowing for the factors of double counting and unsaleability, it is probably not too optimistic to suggest that we could command securities worth £700 millions for disposal in the U.S.A., provided the neutrality laws are amended on "cash and carry" lines.

* * *

The motives behind the decision to raise the Bank rate are difficult to understand. There was no speculative activity being carried on with borrowed money which required deterrent action; nor can it be supposed that the authorities' objective was to attract foreign balances or procure the repayment of foreign credits. If the idea was to demonstrate to the Continent that Britain "means it," this particular gesture was unnecessary and unconvincing. Nor is it possible to "defend the pound" by a relatively slight increase in money rates. If there had been evidence of a serious flight of domestic capital, the solution would have been to impose exchange control at once. The one intelligible explanation—if we discard the supposition that Mr. Norman is 25 years out in his calculation of dates—appears to be that the authorities have at last made up their minds that, war or no war, we are approaching rapidly conditions of "full employment." This being so, it was decided that a moderate dose of deflation would be appropriate this autumn, assuming no war; while, if war occurred, borrowing for Defence issues would be easier with interest rates adjusted in advance to a 4 per cent. Bank rate. This, I suspect, is the Treasury's case; and, provided this increase is not the forerunner of others *à la* 1914, it is difficult seriously to quarrel with it. My only criticism would be that it seems to imply failure to recognise that totalitarian war would involve such regimentation of prices, production and employment that interest rates are irrelevant, and could in fact be fixed at whatever level was deemed appropriate. That being so, it seems somewhat pointless to have deliberately increased the cost of armament finance.

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South West

REAL modern comfort, home-grown produce, wonderful Atlantic view, 2 acres, all go to make holidays at Rockingham, Westward Ho! Devon, ideal. 2½–4 *gns.* Miss FOLL (Northam 183).

TORQUAY, Howden Court Hotel. 4 minutes to sea by private path, garden, attractive sun lounge. Private sitting rooms and private bathrooms if required. A.A. appointed. Tel.: 280711.

SAVERNAKE FOREST. The Forest Hotel. Tel.: Burbage 6. Excellent food. Ideal for walking; forest and downs. Good train service.

You'll find what you're seeking in East Africa. If it's scenery, you'll be among Africa's finest; if it's fish, you won't believe the size and prolificity of the trout until you see for yourself. Big game is there in plenty, whilst your only photographic difficulty is deciding on which of the many perfect subjects to use your film. *Remember, too, that winter in England is summer out there.*

YOU'D ENJOY IT IN

East Africa

For full information and advice write to the London Representative, East African Railways and Harbours, 107, Grand Buildings, Trafalgar Square, London, W.C.2.

RAILWAYS OF EAST AFRICA

South West—continued

CORNWALL (Cape Cornwall). Unique position 8 miles west of Penzance, overlooking Cape Cornwall and the Atlantic. For hotel accommodation or furnished houses on moderate terms apply MANAGER, Porthledden, St. Just, Cornwall.

BUDLEIGH SALTERTON. South Devon Coast, "Mountway" Guest House. Modern comfort.

WEST SOMERSET, between Minehead and Dulverton; superior farmhouse accommodation; stag-hunting; hacks for hire; rough shooting; fishing. Inclusive. Box 4773.

West and Wales

"HIGHTREE," Leintwardine, Bucknell, Salop. Ideally centralised for Herefordshire, Shropshire and the Welsh Marches. Trout fishing. Tariff on request.

PENALLY. Private Guest House, accom. 8 persons, April to November. Special diets studied. Bron Llwyn, Penally, Tenby, Pem. 'Phone: Tenby 56.

CONWAY. Gateway to Snowdonia. River, sea and mountains. Stay at Clemence's Criterion Hotel, Castle Street. Cosy divan rooms, 6*s.* 6*d.* with breakfast. Special en pension terms.

MID-WALES. Comfortable accommodation. Safe area. Peaceful surroundings, lovely country; trout fishing; garages; £3 3*s.* LEWIS, Ithondale, Llanbister, Penybont, Radnor.

North West

DON'T travel abroad this year! The new Pillar Hotel, Langdale Estate, nr. Ambleside, set amidst mountains, woods and lakes, offers greater attractions. Squash rackets, tennis, swimming-pool. An ideal centre for climbing and fell walking. Write for brochure or telephone Grasmere 82.

LAKES. Beautiful Buttermere, "Victoria," leading hotel between Honiston Pass and Cockermouth. Swiss balconies. Electricity; h. and c. Unique grounds. Telephone: 2. Pension from £4 5*s.*

HOLIDAY SUGGESTIONS

Special cheap rates are available for "Holiday Suggestions" advertisements on this page—on application. Other rates and full particulars regarding Classified Advertisements will be found on page 355.

East and North East

PARK HOUSE. Black Notley, Braintree, Essex, 16th C. Guest House; quiet, informal. 6*s.* a day.

WENSLEYDALE, one mile Aysgarth. Guest House for energetic or restful holidays. Near moors. SMITH, Warnford, Thoralby, near Leyburn, Yorks.

Scotland

EDINBURGH GUEST HOUSE. Central. Excellent cuisine. From 7*s.* 6*d.* nightly; from 63*s.* weekly. 45 Manor Place. Tel.: 204191.

EDINBURGH. Manor Hotel, 50 Manor Place. Small quiet, comfortable, modern. Terms from 13*s.* 6*d.* per day. Reduction per week. Tel.: 228191.

SUTHERLANDSHIRE. Aylmer Vallance personally recommends comfortable croft lodgings, excellent cooking, running water h. and c., sea boat. Vacancies September. Apply MRS. ROSS, Skerricha, Rhiconich, By Lairg.

Ireland

WICKLOW MOUNTAINS. Unique situation. London 10 hours. Open moorland, sheltered gardens, good cooking; 18-hole golf course 5 mins. YOUNG, Carrigoona Cottage, Kilmacanogue.

CLIFDEN, Connemara. Rock Glen Hotel. Licensed. H. and C. all rooms. Overlooking Ardbear Bay. Own grounds. Private bathing. Glorious scenery. 4½ *guineas.*

ACHILL ISLAND. Strand Hotel, Dugort, Mayo. Beautifully situated on finest bathing strand. Magnificent scenery. Hot and cold water. Fully licensed, fishing and shooting. TOM SHERIDAN, Proprietor.

Foreign

RIVIERA. HOTEL DE LA MER. Cap Martin. Facing full south in own grounds, direct on Sea. Buses to Menton and Monte Carlo. Pension 7*s.* inclusive

PARIS Vme, Hotel and Pension Alger. 8 rue des Fossés-St. Jacques. Central; heart Latin Quarter. Good rooms from 15 *frs.* daily; special monthly terms.

HOUSES, FLATS, PROPERTY, Etc.
For Sale, To Let and Wanted

ASHDOWN FOREST. Furnished cottage; garden, garage, trout stream, h. and c., indoor sanitation. Sept., 2½ *gns.*; winter, 30*s.* Box 5955.

BEXHILL. To let, well-built, semi-detached house, close station, sea and shops; quiet; 5 bedrooms, 2 reception; all modern conveniences; completely redecorated, ready for occupation; £75 exclusive; low rates. Box 5924.

A.R.P. District. Hadley Wood. Surrounded by green belt. Detached 4 bed. house, garage, on ½ acre. Near station. Freehold. POLLOCK, Mt. Pleasant, Cockfosters.

CHELSEA—best position. Upper part to let in private house, September. Three to four rooms, moderate rent. Constant hot water. Box 5795.

BARGAIN, because of CRISIS. Ground floor, three rooms (two large), cloakroom; suitable two women doctors. Good S.W. address. 37*s.* 6*d.* a week unfurnished. 'Phone: FLA. 9970 or SLO. 3842.

ACCOMMODATION
To Let

CHARMING ROOMS, newly decorated and furnished. Hot and cold. Garden. Rooms, including breakfast, dinner, bath, light, 2 *guineas* weekly. Few minutes Marble Arch and near tube station. 80 Maida Vale, W.9. Mai. 1930.

HYDE PARK. 82 Sussex Gardens, W.2. Ambassador 2941. H. and c. basins. 5*s.* 6*d.* nightly with breakfast, from 23*s.* 6*d.* weekly.

SMALL furnished room vacant. 16*s.* 6*d.* 22 Belsize Avenue, N.W.3. Primrose 1043.

HIGH-CLASS digs. Single and double room to let. Moderate terms. No foreigners. 115 Fellows Road, Hampstead. PRI. 2396.

HAMPSTEAD HEATH. Divan bed-sitting rooms, h. and c., central heating, breakfast, use kitchen and dining room, quiet, from 23*s.* 6*d.* HAM. 3288. Write 21 Pond Street, N.W.3.

BELSIZE PARK. Attractive bed-sitting rooms. Good food; reasonable prices. Apply in evening. SHIPHAM, 44 Glenloch Road, N.W.3.

MODERN Service Rooms with baths, breakfast, 6*s.* 6*d.* per night; from 27*s.* 6*d.* per week. FLAX 1181. 29 West Cromwell Road, S.W.5.

FREE Household, no restrictions. Bed-sitters, £1–27*s.* 6*d.* FLA. 9970 or SLO. 3842.

W.C.1. Attractive, convenient, light, large room; unfurnished. Write Box 5962.

FOR THE TABLE

APPLES. Choice dessert, 28 lbs. 7*s.* 6*d.*, 18 lbs. 4*s.* 6*d.* Excellent cookers, 32 lbs. 4*s.* 6*d.*; 15 lbs. cookers and 14 lbs. dessert, 6*s.* 6*d.* Damsons, 24 lbs. 5*s.*, 12 lbs. 2*s.* 9*d.* All carriage paid England and Wales. FRANK ROSCOE, Steeple Morden, Royston, Herts.